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Mind-reading phones, 3D Internet shopping

Ehem: Avoid asking favors from politicos

HUWAG MAGSOLICIT, KINABUKASAN NATIN ANG KAPALIT!

By Christian V. Esguerra

A NEW ALTAR FOR A poor parish. Basketball jerseys for an "inter-barangay" summer tournament. A new perimeter fence for a

EHEM/ A5

PHILIPPINE DAILY INQUIRER
BALANCED NEWS, FEARLESS VIEWS
Monday, January 22, 2007 ★★ 5 sections / Vol. 22 / No. 45 P18 website: inquirer.net

Gov't to focus on six projects worth P60B

By Doris C. Dumlao

SIX PRIORITY INFRASTRUCTURE PROJECTS OF the government worth over P60 billion, including Terminal 3 of the Ninoy Aquino International Airport, are scheduled to start operations this year, according to Agriculture Secretary Arthur Yap.

Yap, chair of Malacañang's task force on infrastructure monitoring, identified the five other

GOV'T/ A5

'Final battles vs Abus at hand'

By Alcuin Papa

THE MILITARY YESTERDAY BRACED ITself for "final battles" with the Abu Sayyaf and placed its troops on nationwide alert to thwart revenge attacks following the death of the terror group's leader Khadaffy Janjalani.

Shortly before the government confirmed on Saturday the death of the Abu Sayyaf emir (chieftain), Janjalani's followers ambushed a military convoy in Sulu, killing one soldier and wounding seven others.

Armed Forces Chief of Staff Gen. Hermogenes Esperon Jr. said his troops "can feel that the final battles are at hand."

"The end of the Abu Sayyaf is near," he told the INQUIRER. "The soldiers are eager to finish it ... They want to be part of the final battles. They want to take advantage of the fact that the group is leaderless."

Esperon said succeeding military operations against the Abu Sayyaf—whom he estimated to number a little more than 300 men—would be "ferocious and faster in tempo."

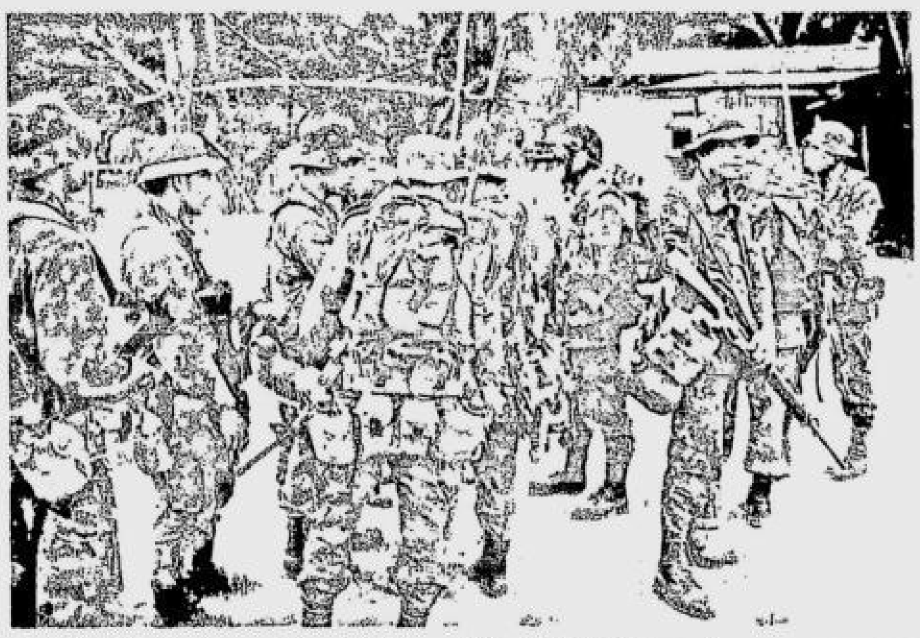
"We'll give them no quarter, we have to hit all the remaining leaders while they're in a crisis," Esperon separately told The Associated Press.

Janjalani's family refused to accept his death and insisted he was still alive as far as they were concerned, despite a DNA test carried out by US authorities that confirmed that the body unearthed in the jungles of Sulu was that of the country's most wanted man. *(See related story on Page A18.)*

AFP spokesperson Col. Bartolome Bacarro said the military had raised its alert status to its highest level of "red." In Mindanao, the alert was at "extreme critical level," meaning more terror attacks were possible, he said.

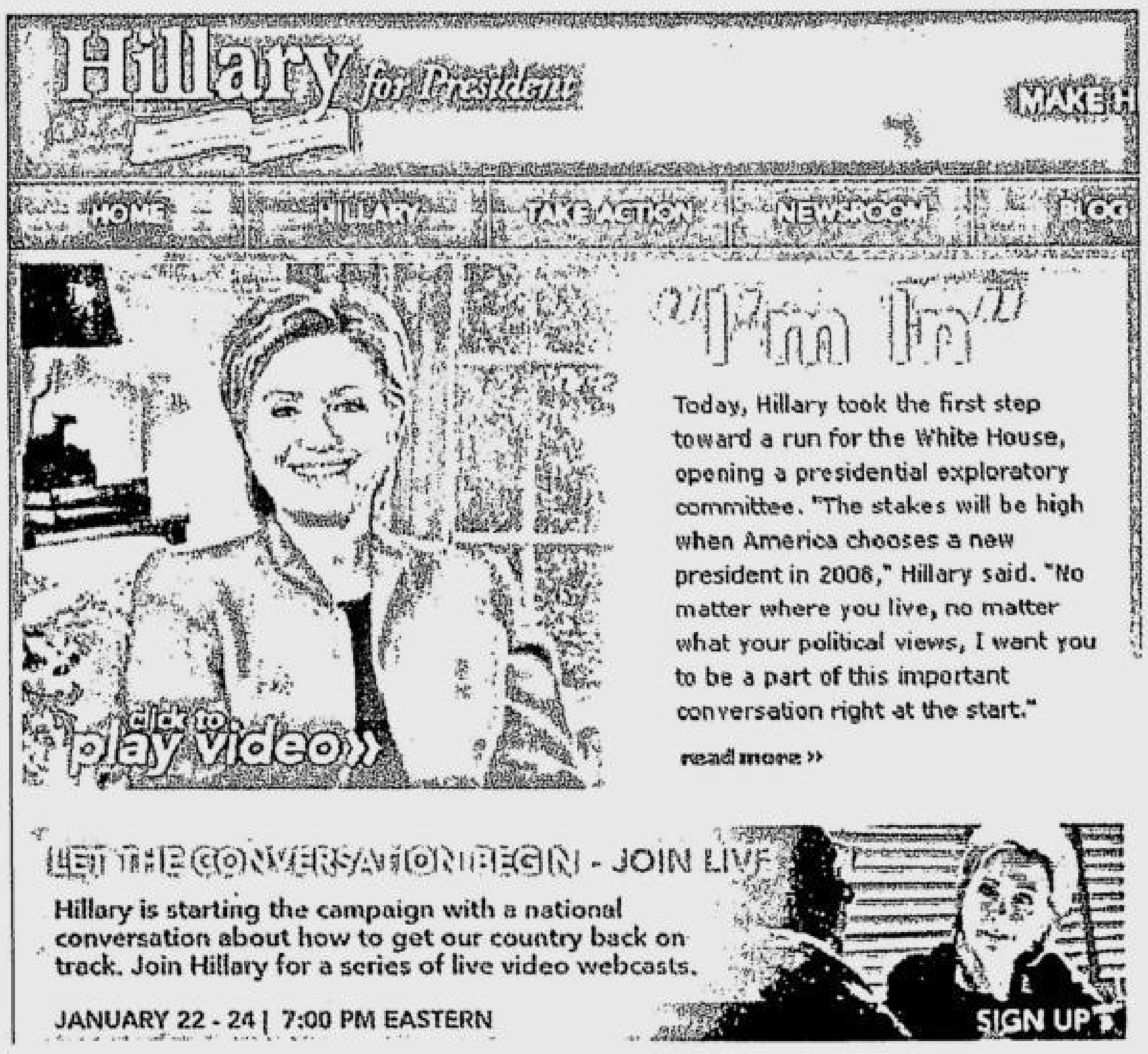
"We are bracing ourselves for retaliatory attacks, like bombings and attacks on soldiers. We are ready to preempt probable attacks," Bacarro said.

FINAL/ A18



MARINES of First Recon Class 12: They got "emir" of Abu Sayyaf. ARLYN DELA CRUZ

Prayers doomed Janjalani



"I'm In"

Today, Hillary took the first step toward a run for the White House, opening a presidential exploratory committee. "The stakes will be high when America chooses a new president in 2008," Hillary said. "No matter where you live, no matter what your political views, I want you to be a part of this important conversation right at the start."

read more »

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JANUARY 22 - 24 | 7:00 PM EASTERN

HILLARY Clinton's presidential campaign website: The front-runner has just stepped onto the stage. REUTERS

Hillary makes US presidential race most exciting in history

WASHINGTON—SEN. HILLARY Clinton has plunged into the 2008 US presidential race an immediate favorite to win her party's nomination, but her polarizing image means Democratic rivals like Barack Obama and John Edwards have a chance to steal it from her.

Her long-awaited entry into the race opened up what promises to be one of the most exciting and groundbreaking political contests in US history—pitting Clinton, determined to become the first American woman president, against Obama, who aims to be the first African-American in the White House.

"I'm in. And I'm in to win," Clinton said in a video announcement on her website on Saturday.

Four days earlier, Senator Obama from Illinois signaled his own plan to fight for the nomination,

HILLARY/ A10

REUTERS

OBAMA: Don't count him out yet.

Iloilo raid shows GMA admin fascistic

By Amando Doronila

(First of two parts)

ANALYSIS

THE ASSAULT BY THE ADMINISTRATION's storm troopers on the Iloilo provincial capitol on Wednesday to evict Iloilo Gov. Niel Tupas Sr. shocked the nation with a brutal show of force not seen since the warrantless arrests unleashed by President Macapagal-Arroyo when she declared a state of national emergency in February 2006.

The assault triggered a wave of national revulsion down to the grass roots, claimed by the administration as the foundation of its electoral constituency.

It would be a lunacy to discount the attack as merely a local episode whose repercussions should be confined to Iloilo.

The regime should beware of the fallout. It has provoked outrage across the country, and handed the opposition a powerful galvanizing issue against the administration ahead of the midterm elections.

The issue raised by the raid and the dismissal orders flagged the message that the administration is abusive, dangerous and cannot be trusted with restraint in the exercise of the state's police powers and with ensuring clean and fair elections in May.

ILOILO/ A6

LAST INTERVIEW

Janjalani: Prophet gave order to kidnap

By Octavio A. Dinampo

[EDITOR'S NOTE: WITH THE confirmed death of Abu Sayyaf leader Khadaffy A. Janjalani, what is believed to be his last extended interview, conducted by Octavio A. Dinampo, a professor of Mindanao State University (MSU)-Sulu, on Feb. 27, 2006, somewhere in the hinterlands of Basilan, is being "declassified," as it were. It is part of some field research undertaken by the South-South Network (SSN) for Non-State Armed Group Engagement in preparation for a coming comprehensive book on Philippine armed groups. It was made available to the INQUIRER by SSN Regional Focal Point for Asia and occasional INQUIRER contributor Soliman M. Santos Jr. It provides a leader's insider view of the Abu Sayyaf, an insight into its origins, its nature, its thinking, its jihad (struggle), and even its prospects, relevant even after the recent deaths of Janjalani and other Abu Sayyaf leaders. The interview was conducted wholly in Tausug and translated into English by Dinampo himself, then slightly edited by Santos but was unexpurgated.]

OCTAVIO A. DINAMPO (OD): I am Octah Dinampo, teaching at MSU-Sulu and currently engaged by the South-South Network (SSN) to conduct a research on the theme "The Abu Sayyaf—Rebel, Bandit, or Terrorist?"

Khadaffy A. Janjalani (KJ): Whew, that's a big deal, indeed. Is it a government project?

OD: No, this is an NGO matter, they want to establish the truth about your organization.

KJ: That's good if like that. Now, how can I be of service?

OD: Foremost, we would like to know direct from you about the Abu Sayyaf Group (ASG). From the very beginning as much as possible.

KJ: The late ustadz (scholar of certain status—referring to his elder brother and ASG founder Abdurajak Abubakar Janjalani) was a man who desired nothing other than becoming religious and having peace in the homeland. Proof of this, his education dwelt not only on life mundane, but also on life spiritual, until he became a teacher in the madrasah (Muslim school). But the problem, the oppressive soldiers had committed so much abuses in Basilan then, that he was compelled to also take the cudgels of calling attention to these during khutbah (lec-

JANJALANI/ A18

Lone voice in jungle attracted Marines

By Arlyn dela Cruz
Contributor

IT WAS NOT A GLOBAL positioning device (GPS) or some other sophisticated monitoring equipment that finally ended the run of Khadaffy Janjalani.

Janjalani's own voice in the early hours of Sept. 4, 2006, as he sang and prayed hymns from the Koran led to the discovery of his hiding place in the jungles of Sulu.

But it was the instinct of a young lieutenant to immediately attack that delivered the deadly clincher, ending the long and costly hunt for the mysterious Abu Sayyaf chieftain.

At least, that was the view from the side of the hunters—given by the soldiers who had been deployed in Sulu to hunt down the Abu Sayyaf and their Jemaah Islamiyah allies.

When the Marine reconnais-

PRAYERS/ A17

SPECIAL PEOPLE

Growing up with Gabe

By Bill P. Formoso
Night Editor

(Last of a series)

i-TEAM *Report*
Fernando del Mundo
Chief

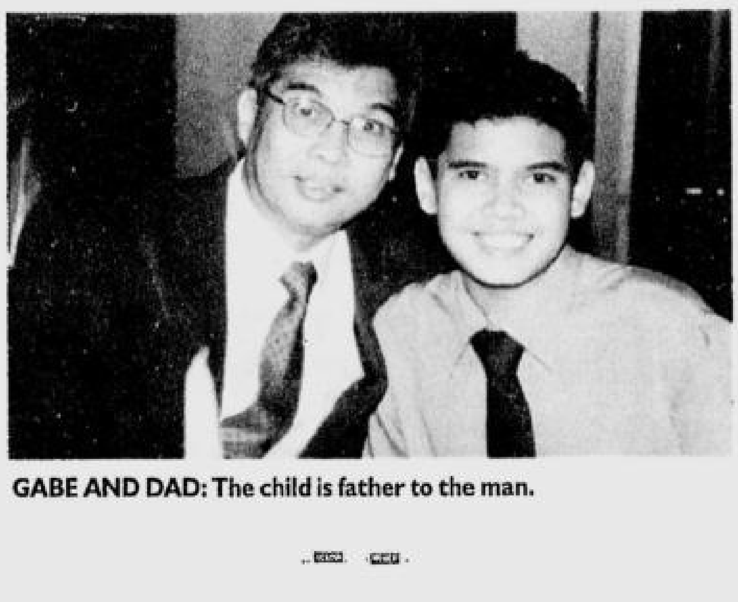
THE "GROWING UP" IN THE title does not refer to my 20-year-old son Gabriel, or Gabe, who has autism, but to me.

At 55, I've been through school twice—from kindergarten to college. This is my second go-round. But I learned so much more the second time around—with Gabe as my teacher.

Before Gabe was born, I was an irresponsible fellow who grew up spoiled, took things as they came, and did not really think much about the future.

In May 1985, Gabe came into the world (our daughter Isabel—Beia—was born in 1982) and our family was complete. Living in the United States then, we found it easy to work and then travel some,

GROWING/ A19



GABE AND DAD: The child is father to the man.

WEATHER FORECAST

FORECAST: Extreme Northern Luzon will experience mostly cloudy skies with scattered rainshowers. Eastern Visayas and Mindanao will have mostly cloudy skies with scattered rainshowers and thunderstorms. The rest of the country will be partly cloudy to at times cloudy with isolated rainshowers or thunderstorms.

COMPILED BY KATE PEDROSO, INQUIRER RESEARCH/01/21/07 SOURCE PAGASA

Metro Manila	Partly Cloudy	Iloilo/Bacolod	Partly Cloudy
Baguio	Partly Cloudy	Roxas	Partly Cloudy
Tuguegarao	Partly Cloudy	Cebu	Partly Cloudy
Laoag	Partly Cloudy	Tacloban	Cloudy with Rains
Clark Zone	Partly Cloudy	Gen. Santos	Cloudy with Rains
Tagaytay	Partly Cloudy	Zamboanga	Cloudy with Rains
Legazpi	Partly Cloudy	Cagayan de Oro	Cloudy with Rains
Calapan	Partly Cloudy	Davao	Cloudy with Rains

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Second FrontPage

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6 Filipino seamen abducted in Nigeria

By Nikko Dizon

SIX FILIPINO SEAMEN AND A NIGERIAN WERE kidnapped Saturday by an armed militant group in Nigeria's restive southern oil-producing region, the Department of Foreign Affairs (DFA) confirmed early last night.

"The Filipinos are not oil workers in Nigeria but crew members of a ship passing through the area," Esteban Conejos Jr., DFA undersecretary for migrant workers' affairs, said in a phone interview.

The identities of the Filipino seamen were not disclosed.

"Six Filipinos and one local staffer were seized," a private security contractor told AFP.

"The vessel is still being held with six Filipinos in it. We understand they are OK. (State) Gov. James Ibori is already intervening on the matter," a spokesperson for the Delta State government, Ozoene Sheddy, said.

"There were 14 crew members on board but only six were taken," Sheddy said.

He said the incident happened on Saturday morning at Okerenkoko and that the vessel was a "cargo ship operated by the Baco Liner Company."

Philippine Ambassador to Abuja, Masaranga Umpa, has already dispatched embassy staff members to Warri, which is 900 miles from the capital, to coordinate with Niger Delta State authorities for the immediate release of the Filipinos.

Ships entering Delta State are often harassed by pirates from local communities who demand protection money.

The Filipino seamen were kidnapped by members of the Movement of the Emancipation of the Niger Delta (MEND) as their ship made its way to the oil port of Warri, Delta State's capital, said Ed Malaya, acting DFA spokesperson.

"The Filipino nationals are unharmed," said Malaya.

"The group is demanding the release of a prisoner being held by the Nigerian federal government. We have no word as to other demands except for the release of this prisoner," Malaya said.

Malaya said information gathered by the Philippine Embassy in Abuja revealed that the cargo ship owner was based in the United Arab Emirates.

"We have asked our embassy in Abu Dhabi to help us get in touch with the ship owner and the DFA is now in the process of getting in touch with the Filipinos' local manning agency here in the Philippines," Malaya said.

Last year, at least three Filipino oil workers were held hostage in two separate incidents in the Niger Delta, a vast wetlands region which is home to all of Nigeria's oil resources.

MEND was behind the kidnapping of one of them.

While the Filipinos were released unharmed, they were visibly shaken and traumatized by the experience.

Nearly 100 foreign hostages, mostly oil workers that help keep the crude flowing in Africa's largest petroleum producer, have been seized in an upsurge of violence that has trimmed nearly a quarter off Nigeria's usual production.

Most of the foreign oil workers kidnapped were later released, usually after ransom was paid.

However, one Briton and one Nigerian died in the crossfire when Nigerian security forces once tried to liberate the hostages from their captors.

On Thursday, militants released five Chinese hostages and one Italian who had been seized in separate attacks. Two Italians and one Lebanese are still in militant captivity. *With AP, AFP reports*

GMA draws some heckling at concert

AN UNEXPECTED CHORUS rang out as President Macapagal-Arroyo was about to make her way out of a pop opera concert Saturday night.

The President was heckled by some people in the mostly A-list crowd who attended the "El Divo" concert held at the Philippine International Convention Center in Pasay City the other night.

The heckling came after organizers of the show asked the audience to remain in their seats while President Arroyo was about to depart from the auditorium, according to a member of the audience who witnessed the incident.

The witness described the heckling as "muffled" and that it came from some people seated in the upper boxes of the auditorium.

"It was not loud," said the witness, who acknowledged though that Ms Arroyo, who was seated up front, very likely heard it anyway.

She said she did not know why the President was heckled but noted that it came after the organizers asked everyone to remain in their seats because Ms Arroyo was leaving the premises.

But the witness said some people thought the heckling was due to the late arrival of the President at the concert held by El Divo, a group of European singers who wowed the crowd with their pop opera songs, mostly in Italian.

The concert started at around 8:30 p.m. and ended at about 10 p.m. *Christine O. Avendaño*

Ex-gov's son dies

CITY OF MALOLOS—The son of former Bulacan Gov. Roberto Pagdanganan, currently Philippine International Trading Corp. chair and president, died yesterday at St. Luke's Medical Center in Quezon City from injuries sustained in a vehicular accident.

Supt. Manuel Lukban, city police chief, said Raymond Pagdanganan, 26, was driving his Nissan pickup at 3 a.m. on the MacArthur Highway here when he hit a tricycle and his vehicle rolled over and slammed into an electric post. *Carmela Reyes, Inquirer Central Luzon*

I have no pending cases, says Chavit

ILOCOS SUR GOV. LUIS "CHAVIT" Singson yesterday insisted there were no longer any pending cases against him in the Office of the Ombudsman.

"As far as I know, I have no pending cases. All cases filed against me by my political enemies have been dismissed," Singson said.

Singson expressed surprise over reports of the alleged cases against him as claimed by lawyer Estelita Cordero of the Save Ilocos Sur Alliance Foundation (Sisa), whom he accused of blackmail.

According to Singson, Cordero was "making noise" because he refused to give her money for her silence. "She asked for an appointment with me and then she was asking for a million pesos," Chavit claimed.

He recalled that Cordero was his opponent in the gubernatorial elections and she didn't even get 10 percent of the total vote.

"I could see through her attempt to blackmail me because she was desperately in need of money. I refused to give in to her demand for a million pesos, so now she is trying other tactics," he said.

Special Prosecutor Dennis Villa-Ignacio had said that the Ombudsman had in its dockets at least nine criminal and administrative complaints against Singson.

These included two administrative cases for graft and a criminal complaint for plunder, Villa-Ignacio said in a letter to Sen. Franklin Drilon in December, a copy of which was furnished to the INQUIRER by Cordero.

Erap impeach prosecutors hit Defensor plan

THE PRIVATE PROSECUTORS IN the impeachment trial of deposed President Joseph Estrada have expressed alarm over the revival of a proposal for his temporary liberty, calling it a "politician's gimmick."

"We condemn any effort to use the Estrada plunder case, the issues on temporary liberty, recognizance, or any of its incidents as leverage for any political negotiation, personal benefit, gratification or accommodation," the prosecutors said in a statement.

Last week, Presidential Chief of Staff Michael Defensor announced that he was running for senator and that the temporary freedom of Estrada would be part of his campaign platform. This, he said, was his bid to try and draw a Senate unity ticket.

Prosecutors Arno V. Sanidad, Anthony B. Peralta, Christian Robert Lim and John Jerico L. Balisnomo released a statement protesting the Defensor proposal.

These were the same lawyers who walked out during the 2001 impeachment trial when pro-Estrada senators voted not to open the second envelop that allegedly contained the "Jose Velarde" account.

"The Estrada plunder case is greater than any one person; it is more than any one interest: it is a matter for the people. Just retribution, should Estrada be found guilty, belongs to the people—to the state as an aggrieved nation. Words like 'reconciliation' and 'peace' are again peddled as if the former president's resthouse arrest is anything but just, lawful and equitable," the statement said.

"The Estrada plunder case is not a commodity to be bartered or bargained with anyone for political survival or personal comfort. The Estrada plunder case is a judicial matter... Thus, it is not for the administration or the opposition, or any politician to use, or give the appearance of using the issue as a bargaining chip or a mechanism for either attracting votes, or for continued threats or coercion... Personal or political benefit or advantage cannot be gained under the guise of reconciliation," the statement added.

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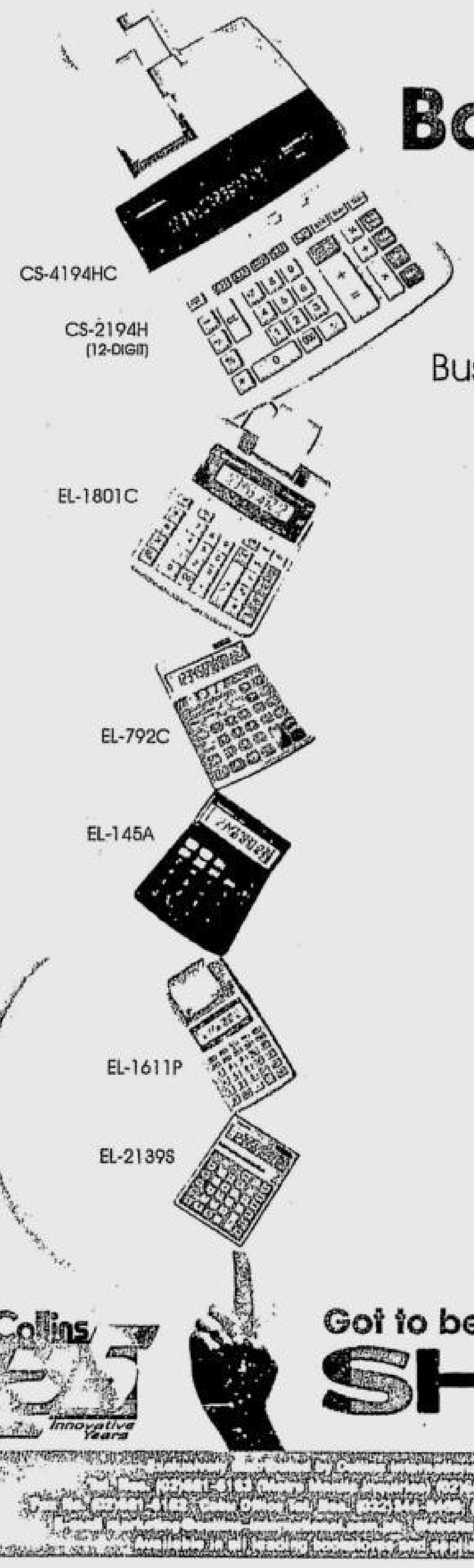

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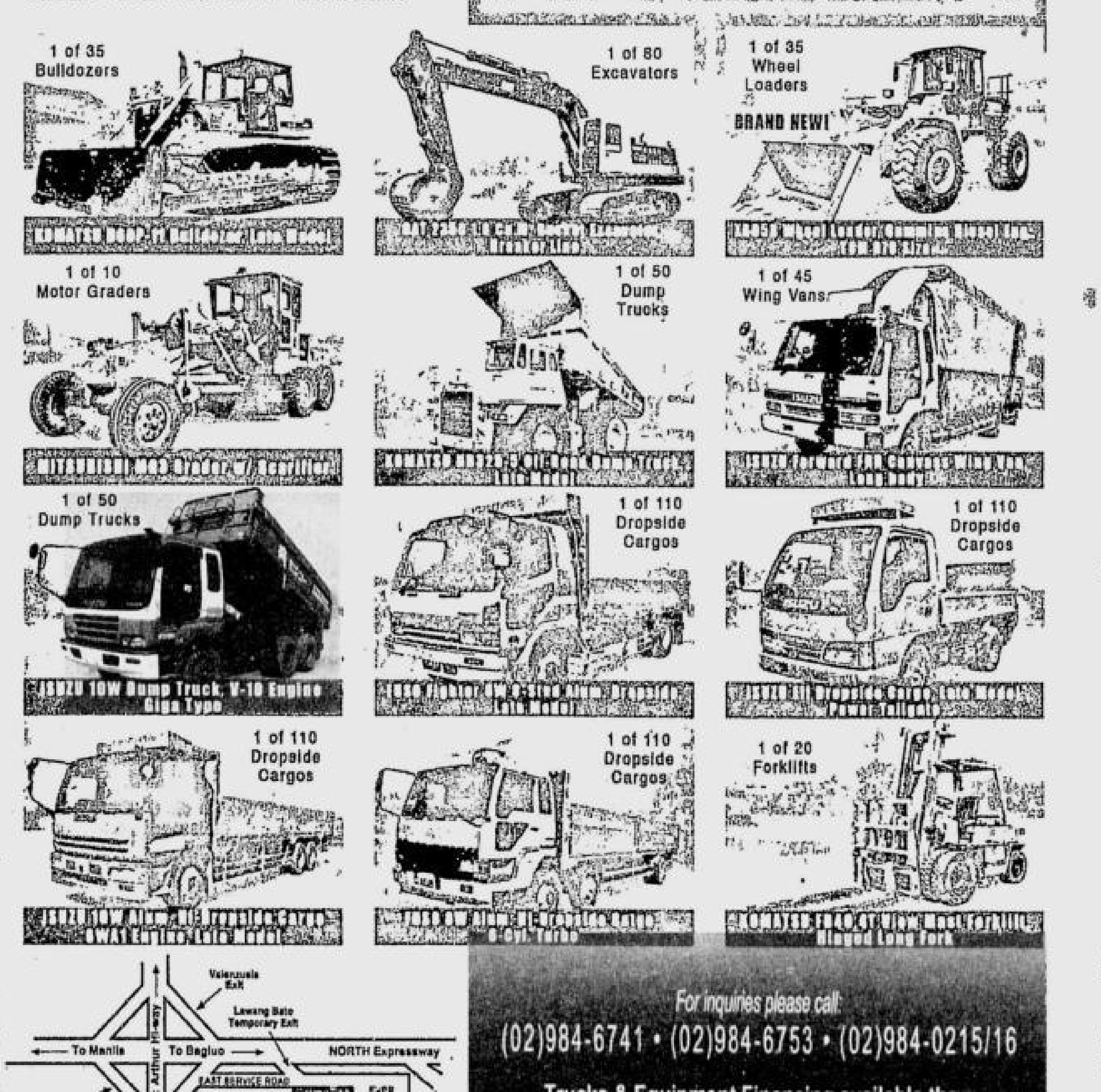

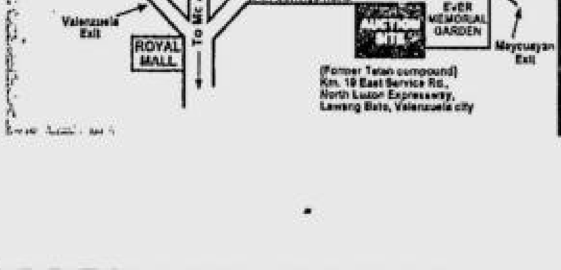

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Davide app't to UN legal, says Palace

AS CONGRESS RESUMES ITS SESSION today, Malacañang continues to insist the appointment of retired Chief Justice Hilario Davide as the country's Permanent Representative to the United Nations did not need prior confirmation by the Commission on Appointments, which is composed of members of the legislature.

Press Secretary Ignacio Bunye said President Macapagal-Arroyo could make appointments when Congress was out.

"Whenever Congress is not in session, the Chief Executive may issue an ad interim appointment and the appointee can immediately assume office," Bunye said.

President Arroyo in Cebu last week swore in Davide, whom she had appointed last year to replace outgoing ambassador to the UN Lauro Baja.

But the presidential move drew strong protest from some senators who insisted that Davide should have first been confirmed by the CA before he could assume the diplomatic post.

Sen. Jinggoy Estrada even said he would ask the UN to reject Davide's appointment, but Palace officials said they doubted UN officials would intervene in the matter.

They also cited legal jurisprudence, with Bunye reiterating yesterday that the Palace move was backed by the Supreme Court decision in the Benipayo v Magtibay case. *Christine O. Avendaño and Gil C. Cabacungan Jr.*

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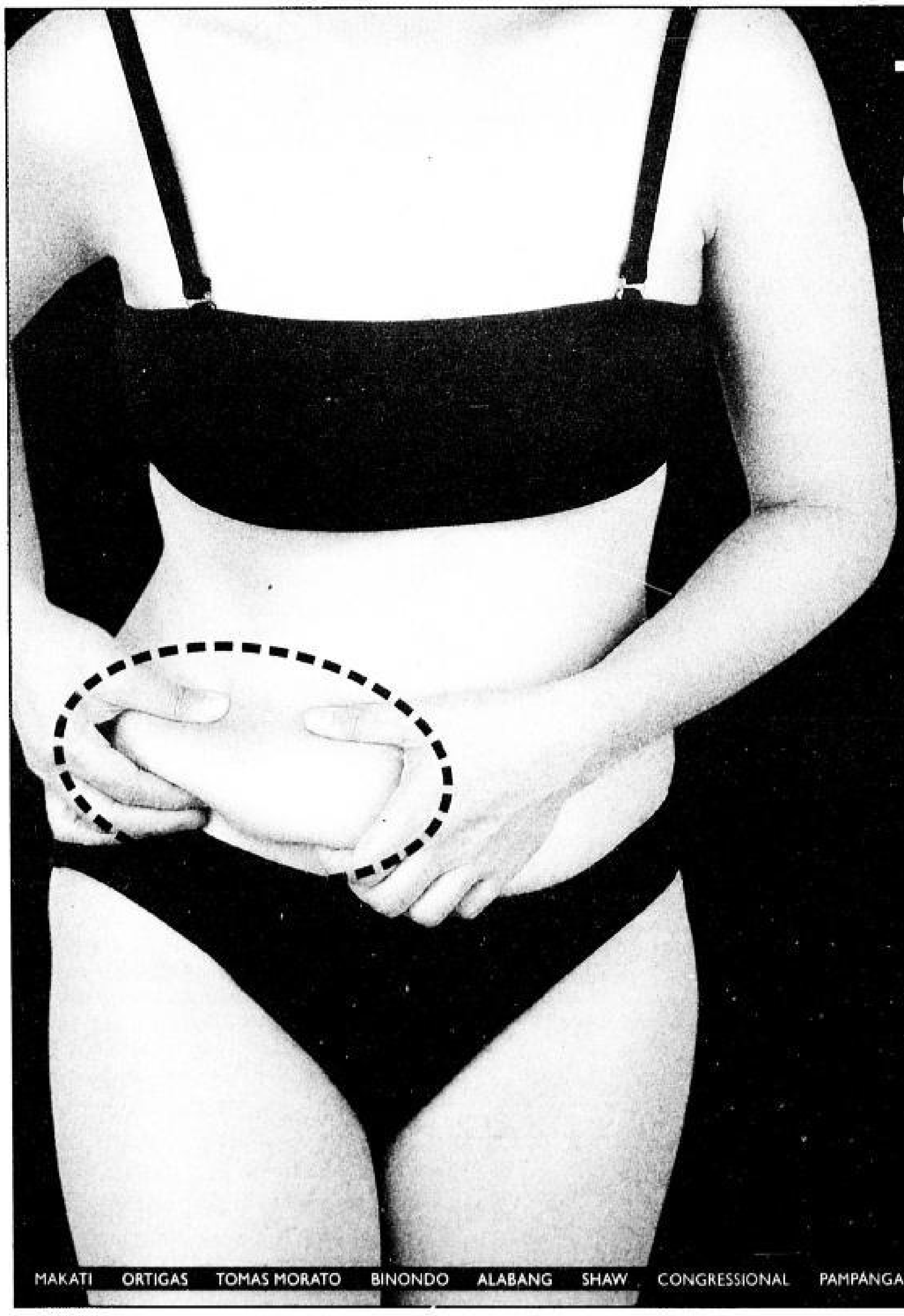

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Tillers, survivors recall 20-yr-old Mendiola massacre

By DJ Yap

MILITANT FARMERS GATHERED YESTERDAY under sunny skies at the Bantayog ng mga Bayani in Quezon City to unveil a granite marker remembering a dark moment in history: The Mendiola massacre.

Two decades after 13 protesting farmers were gunned down near the gates of Malacañang, their friends and loved ones called out to their memory and proclaimed them heroes in the struggle for genuine land reform.

"They were heroes, all of them," said Purita Yumul, 42, the widow of Roberto Yumul, one of those who were killed on Jan. 22, 1987, when state forces opened fire at thousands of peasants who had protested at Mendiola.

But along with salutations for the farmers' heroism were plaintive calls for justice: "To this day, no one has been punished for my husband's death. There is still no justice," Yumul said.

Yesterday, she joined 50 other members of Kilusang Enero 22 and Kilusang Magbubukid ng Pilipinas for a solemn ceremony to commemorate the 20th anniversary of the Mendiola massacre.

"I pray that one day justice will be served and my husband will finally be at peace," she told the INQUIRER.

The group unveiled a black granite marker measuring 60 by 60 centimeters honoring the 13 farmers who were slain during the infamous episode under then President Corazon Aquino's fledgling administration.

On the *panandang bato* (memorial stone) were inscribed the words in Filipino and translated here: "On this bridge of Mendiola on Jan. 22, 1987, occurred the Mendiola Massacre, where 13 martyrs gave up their lives for true land reform."

The 13 names were on the marker along with the words, "*Pagpupugay sa inyong kadakilaan para sa uring magbubukid at mamamayang Pilipino* (In honor of your greatness for the peasantry and the Filipino people)."

"We are here to remember the supreme sacrifice our brothers had offered in the struggle for genuine land reform," said Danilo Ramos, secretary general of KMP.

"Twenty long years have already passed but justice has not been served. The criminals who ordered the government forces to fire at our unarmed rally have not been punished," Ramos said in a statement.

Correction

IN THE ARTICLE, "Lee Aguinaldo, Mr. Cool of RP art, is dead; 73," it was stated that Aguinaldo was buried at Manila Memorial Park. He was not, his remains were interred at Loyola Memorial Park in Parañaque City. Aguinaldo's eviction from the house he was living in occurred between 1989 and 1990. He did not only lose his art works during the eviction process but also the tools of his trade and his appliances.

* * *

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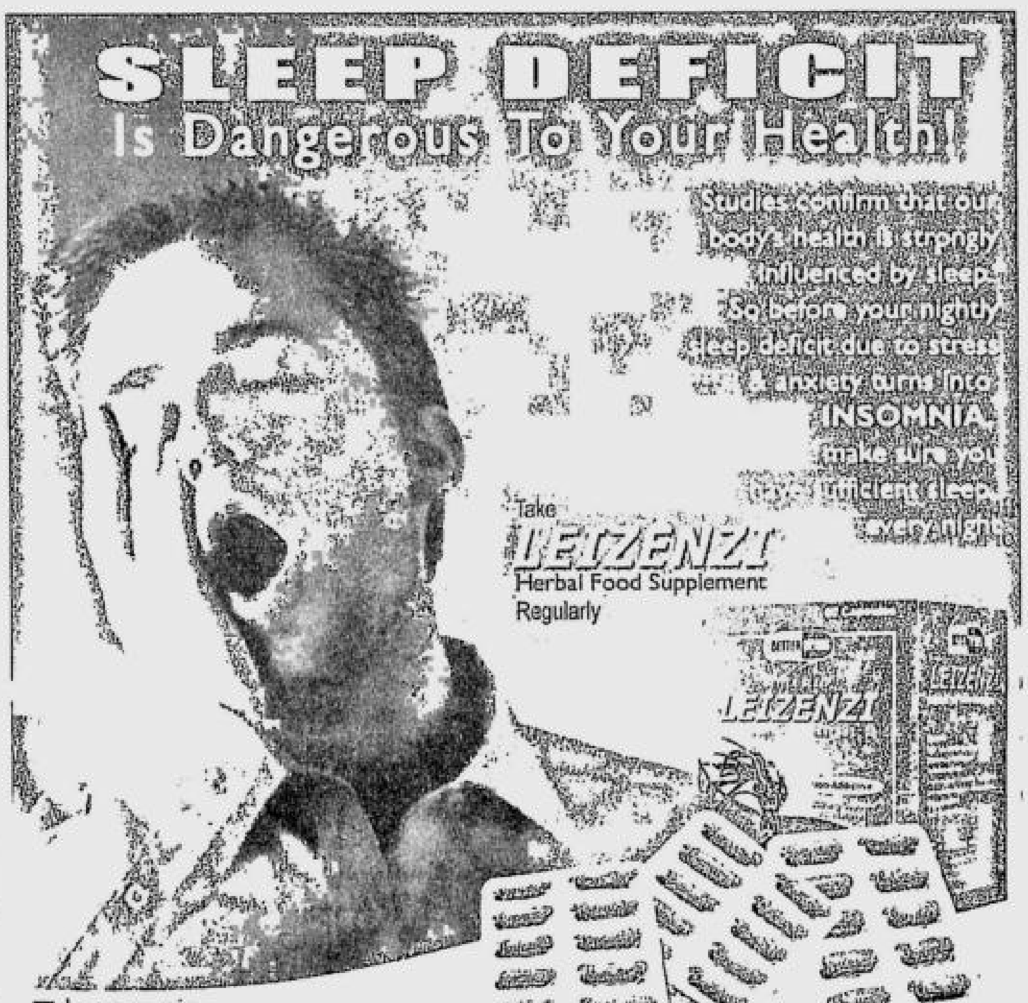
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Gov't to focus on 6 priority projects worth ₱60B

From page A1

projects as follows:

- Expansion of the passenger terminal at the Diosdado Macapagal International Airport in Clark, Pampanga.
- Extension of the Star 2 expressway from Lipa to Batangas City.
- Construction of the Subic-Clark-Tarlac Expressway.
- Modernization of the Subic Container Port with the construction of two terminals.
- Rehabilitation of Edsa.

Yap said the projects were in line with President Macapagal-Arroyo's State of the Nation Address last July, which committed a massive investment program to sustain economic growth and spread progress nationwide through the "super region" development strategy.

Infrastructure train

At an infrastructure forum titled "Catching the Infrastructure Train," Yap said the government was undertaking an appraisal of the completed work on Terminal 3 of Naia, which would serve as the basis for "just compensation" to Philippine International Air Terminals Corp. (Piatco), the German-led consortium that built the terminal.

Ms Macapagal revoked the contract in 2002 because certain terms were illegally renegotiated by her predecessor, ousted President Joseph Estrada.

Terminal 3 has been mothballed since then and has been the subject of legal battles between the government and the consortium.

Piatco filed a notice for arbitration with a tribunal in Singapore after the contract was revoked, demanding $565 million in compensation.

The German-based Fraport AG, which has a 30-percent stake in Piatco, is pursuing a separate arbitration process in Washington and is seeking $465 million.

The project, including a 13-lane runway, is 98 percent complete. It is expected to be operational in March 2007, according to Yap.

He said the expansion of the passenger terminal expansion of the Diosdado Macapagal International Airport, a hub for low-cost international carriers, will be completed by the end of December. The project is worth about P150 million.

Yap said the procurement of civil works for the airport expansion was going on. The Terminal Radar Approach Control is installed and will be operational by April.

Clark Development Corp. will fund the construction.

The Star 2 project involves the construction of a 19.74-kilometer road from Lipa to Batangas City and the operation and maintenance of the 41.8-km stretch, including the section constructed by the Department of Public Works and Highways from Sto. Tomas to Lipa City.

The road construction, which will be completed by December, will cost P1.5 billion. The amount excludes the P1 billion for right of way.

The Subic-Clark-Tarlac Expressway project will build, operate and maintain a 93.77-km highway. Construction is scheduled for April-November, with the Bases Conversion Development Authority as the implementing agency. The project is estimated to cost P21 billion.

Subic Container Port

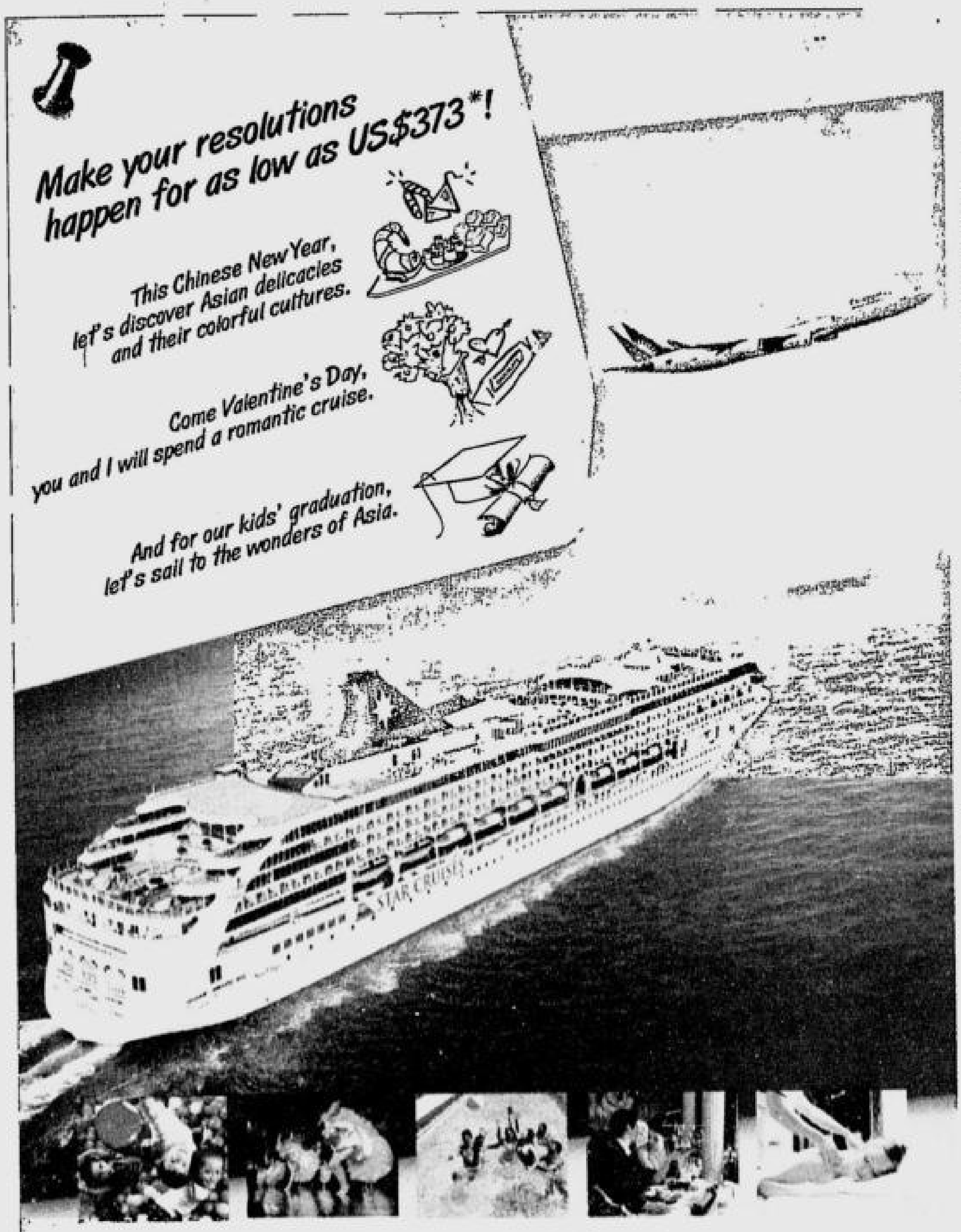
The Subic Bay Port Development Project calls for the modernization of the Subic Container Port. It involves the construction of two container terminals, installation of gantry cranes for each berth, building of access roads, rehabilitation of wharves, and procurement of navigational aids.

The construction of the container terminals is scheduled to be finished by the middle of next month, according to Yap.

The last project is the rehabilitation of Edsa, the main highway in Metro Manila.

The rehabilitation includes the construction of footbridges, loading and unloading bays, and improvement of sidewalks and tunnels. The project cost is not yet known.

The forum was jointly conducted by First Metro Investment Corp. and the University of Asia and the Pacific.



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Ehem: Avoid asking ...

From page A1

dilapidated public school. Road repair work for a low-income community.

For a change, never ask for any of these favors from any candidate running in the May congressional and local elections, a Church anticorruption advocacy group called "Ehem" urged the public yesterday.

The group was reintroducing its "Walang Hihingi" (Nobody Ask) campaign for the coming elections, hoping to help change the culture of corruption in government beginning with the practice of voters "soliciting" many different favors from politicians.

"Let us reclaim our dignity," reads the campaign poster of the group initiated by the Jesuits of the Ateneo de Davao four years ago.

Ronnie Amorado, the group's national coordinator, said it was reviving the "Walang Hihingi" campaign following its relative success in the 2004 elections.

"Many people got curious about the program when we first introduced it in 2004," Amorado told the INQUIRER yesterday. "We felt many are really concerned about the way elections are won in our country and they want to change it."

For the voter, he said an important first step was to refrain from seeking any favor from candidates, who, in turn, were naturally bent on getting someone's precious ballot.

No reason to steal

Ehem's rationale is quite simple: With voters not squeezing anything out of politicians, there should be no reason for them to steal from the public coffers in case they won.

"When the temptation to solicit from politicians comes, we should also ask where they will be getting the money and the chances that they'll get themselves paid using public funds the moment they assume public office," Amorado explained.

The Ehem campaign is straightforward, its posters listing specific occasions when politicians are asked by voters for certain favors.

In parishes, for instance, it's no secret that priests go to politicians whenever they need the altar repaired or to purchase church items like candles, according to the group.

In communities, a familiar sight involves politicians sponsoring town fiestas and basketball tournaments. Some neighborhood associations go to the extent of soliciting funds from politicians for a new multipurpose hall or sacks of rice, the group noted.

For schools, gates and walls are a common advertisement for donor politicians, it said.

"This is not the time for any of these," according to Ehem.

10 commandments

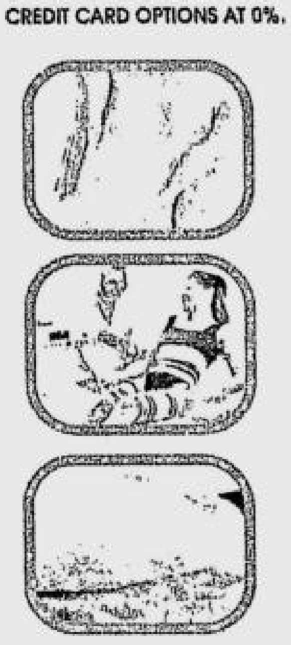
But what if favors were given by politicians themselves?

"It's the same thing," Amorado said. "The moment we accept their favor, it will again start off this culture of corruption that we are trying to change."

The Ehem program was reintroduced as two other Church-based election advocacy programs were launched by the Parish Pastoral Council for Responsible Voting (PPCRV) and the Philippine Bible Society (PBS).

The PPCRV earlier came up with its own election education campaign titled "Pinoy Voters' Academy." The program included a set of criteria in choosing candidates titled "10 Commandments for Responsible Voting."

The PBS, an umbrella organization of Catholic and Christian leaders, also launched a related set of guidelines based on the Scripture.



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Iloilo raid shows GMA admin fascistic

From page A1

A potentially disastrous backlash from voters is looming on the horizon. The administration cannot ignore the gathering storm over the raid. The issue has the potential to fuel widespread anger, especially in the provinces, whose officials are directly involved in the purge.

It is not a Metro Manila issue alone. It is an issue that can catch fire if the opposition knows how to exploit it to break the administration's control of Congress and to shift the balance of power in the legislature.

Repressive character

The storming of the capitol highlighted the excessive use of force in the attempt to evict Tupas from office, after he had refused to bow to the arbitrary dismissal order of the Ombudsman while he was seeking relief from the order with the Court of Appeals.

The assault also confirmed the underlying repressive and fascistic character of the Arroyo regime.

It underscored the issues of presidential abuse of executive powers, the ugly face of which surfaced during the national emergency proclamation last February and when the President, with the aid of her allies in the House of Representatives, crushed the impeachment complaints last year.

With an overwhelming majority in the House, proadministration legislators also tried to ram through a proposal to change the Constitution to ensure Ms Arroyo's stay in office until the end of her term of office in 2010. The House backed off from its attempt to convene a constituent assembly only after Catholic bishops and other sectors threatened to stage nationwide rallies against the move.

Rampage to cripple opposition

The assault has fueled fears that the administration has gone on a rampage to cripple any semblance of opposition in the run-up to the May elections.

The suspension and dismissal of local executives are seen as political purges. In an unaccustomed display of overzealousness, the Ombudsman is presenting the orders as part of the campaign to clean up the stinking stables of local officials to make it appear that the administration is determined to rid the government of graft.

Tupas tops the list of officials ordered dismissed or suspended from office during the past six months. Based on Inquirer Research's files, the list contains up to 50 names, including appointed officials.

They are being dismissed or suspended for offenses ranging from grave misconduct, dishonesty, corruption, conduct prejudicial to the best interest of the service, graft, and abuse of authority.

Ombudsman as hit man

The list looks like a political purge, in which the Ombudsman is apparently being used as the hit man, because it singles out high-profile local politicians who are associated with the opposition and who are considered more popular than candidates seen as allies of the President.

Besides Tupas, an ally of Sen. Franklin Drilon in the Liberal Party wing that withdrew support from Ms Arroyo in July 2005, the list targets two of Tupas' provincial board members; Pasay City Mayor Wenceslao Trinidad, Vice Mayor Antonio Calixto and eight councilors; Gov. Armando Sanchez of Batangas and five other provincial officials, and Mayor Antonio Esquivel of Jaen, Nueva, Ecija.

Esquivel is the opponent of reelectionist Rep. Rodolfo Antonio, a presidential ally in the House, in the Nueva Ecija congressional race.

Gov. Erineo Maliksi of Cavite and Mayor Jejomar Binay of Makati, a leader of the United Opposition, who has made his city the center of opposition protest activities in Metro Manila, were earlier ordered suspended by the Ombudsman. Maliksi and Binay obtained restraining orders from the Court of appeals.

Ominous sign

Ombudsman Merceditas Guitierrez on Jan. 15 directed Interior Secretary Ronaldo Puno to "immediately implement" all the dismissal and suspension orders she had issued.

On Jan. 16, Puno gave Tupas, Esquivel and Trinidad 48 hours to vacate their posts.

The assault on the Iloilo capitol is an ominous sign of things to come for the regime because it has raised an issue that has created wide resonance among local officials.

The excessive use of force in Iloilo provoked condemnation from the Manila Mayors' League, some senators and the independent Commission on Human Rights.

Local executives have denounced the actions that are clearly part of the "dirty tricks" of the administration aimed at crippling the opposition in its campaign to retain its stranglehold on the House of Representatives and provincial and municipal offices.

CHR Chair Purificacion Quisumbing said she was shocked to see policemen with assault rifles smashing the locks of the capitol gates and breaking glass doors in their effort to oust Tupas.

Quisumbing said the actions of the police were inconsistent with "the picture we are trying to portray of a peaceful country of law-abiding citizens."

"When you point a gun at somebody, is it just to poke him on the head? Their posture appeared they were ready to shoot," she said. *(Part 2 will appear in the Analysis column on Wednesday.)*

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Meanwhile, the second interruption will be due to the installation of new valves along C-5 in Taguig. The following areas will be affected: Barangays Rizal, Pembo, BCDA, Diego Silang and Palar.

Manila Water Company advises all residents of the said areas to store enough water prior to the scheduled interruptions to avoid inconvenience.

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Inspection to determine where Honasan will be held

By Tarra Quismundo

BUT IS IT FIT FOR GRINGO?

Court personnel will find this out on Friday when they inspect the police-run Fort Sto. Domingo in Sta. Rosa, Laguna, a heavily guarded detention facility where former Sen. Gregorio "Gringo" Honasan has been held since his arrest in November.

Judge Oscar Pimentel and the staff of Makati Regional Trial Court Branch 148 will go to Sta. Rosa to check Honasan's place of detention, a visit Pimentel deemed necessary for the court to decide whether or not to grant the former Army colonel's request to be transferred to the Makati City jail (MCJ).

Pimentel had checked out the MCJ on Jan. 19 and found it "orderly and clean" and its personnel "OK," but withheld further comment until he had decided on whether he would grant Honasan's plea to be detained there instead of at Fort Sto. Domingo.

Honasan's lawyer, Daniel Gutierrez, said that being at the Sta. Rosa detention facility was like being in a cage, although it had better amenities than the MCJ, which is supervised by the Bureau of Jail Management and Penology and is a holding facility for crime suspects facing trial.

"Fort Sto. Domingo is a lot better in terms of physical comfort. But [it's like] being in a gilded cage where he can't talk to anybody," Gutierrez said in an interview.

The lawyer said Honasan was being held in a bungalow that could be reached only after passing through several gates and security checks. Usually, he said, it took 20 minutes to an hour to get a clearance to visit the former senator.

Honasan, detained on charges of coup d'etat for his alleged role in the 2003 Oakwood mutiny, was being guarded inside and outside the bungalow. His roommates are police guards.

"The BJMP is there to take custody of detention prisoners. The problem with the CIDG (Criminal Investigation and Detection Group of the Philippine National Police) and the police detaining him is that they are the ones who had filed the charges against him. It's like being held in your neighbor's house who has filed a case against you," Gutierrez said.

The coup d'etat case filed against Honasan in February 2006 was based on a complaint filed by the police. Some 31 junior military officers involved in the day-long mutiny have been on trial since 2004 for the same case filed separately in Pimentel's sala.

Pimentel is also expected to resolve, within the month, Honasan's request to leave his detention quarters to personally file his certificate of candidacy for senator at the Commission on Elections main office in Intramuros, Manila.

State prosecutors opposed the move, saying Honasan was a "flight risk."

Gutierrez said the former senator had no "flight plan" as he could barely walk due to a leg injury. Besides, he would want to be visible to help boost his chances of returning to the legislature.

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Gov't officials back GCC's bid to be SC justice

HEADS OF STATE FIRMS AND LOCAL GOVernment leaders have thrown their support behind the appointment of Government Corporate Counsel (GCC) Agnes VST Devanadera as an associate justice of the Supreme Court.

"Devanadera is supremely qualified and holds the ideals that would make her an esteemed member of the bench," said Quedancor president and CEO Nelson C. Buenaflor. "She has consistently shown her probity, competence and impartiality as the Government Corporate Counsel."

Devanadera is on the shortlist of nominees for the associate justice seat left vacant by the replacement by Justice Reynato Puno of Chief Justice Artemio Panganiban who retired last Dec. 7.

Duty Free Philippines general manager Michael Christian U. Kho, in endorsing Devanadera to the Judicial Bar Council, said she possessed qualities that recommended her appointment to the high court.

"Attorney Devanadera has been a competent partner in our continuing pursuit for strategic reforms in the government corporate sector towards good governance. The reforms she instituted in the Office of the Government Corporate Counsel have redounded to the benefit of its hundreds of client government-owned and -controlled corporations," Kho said.

Local government executives also issued a manifesto of support for Devanadera.

The League of Cities of the Philippines said Devanadera "is committed to good governance and to the interests and welfare of the poor and the needy through proper representation in local government units."

The League of Municipalities of the Philippines said Devanadera "is an advocate of people empowerment, local autonomy, women's and children's rights and is a staunch supporter of legislative reforms."

Devanadera was appointed GCC in September 2004. She had served as undersecretary for legal and legislative affairs at the Department of the Interior and Local Government where she led the investigation into the Oakwood mutiny of 2003.

She had also headed the anti-illegal drugs campaign as its national action officer.

THE DAILY GOSPEL

Monday, January 22, 2007
3rd Week in Ordinary Time
St. Vincent

1st Reading: **Heb 9:15, 24-28**
Gospel: **Mark 3:22-30**

The teachers of the Law who had come from Jerusalem said, "He is possessed by Beelzebul: the chief of the demons helps him to drive out demons."

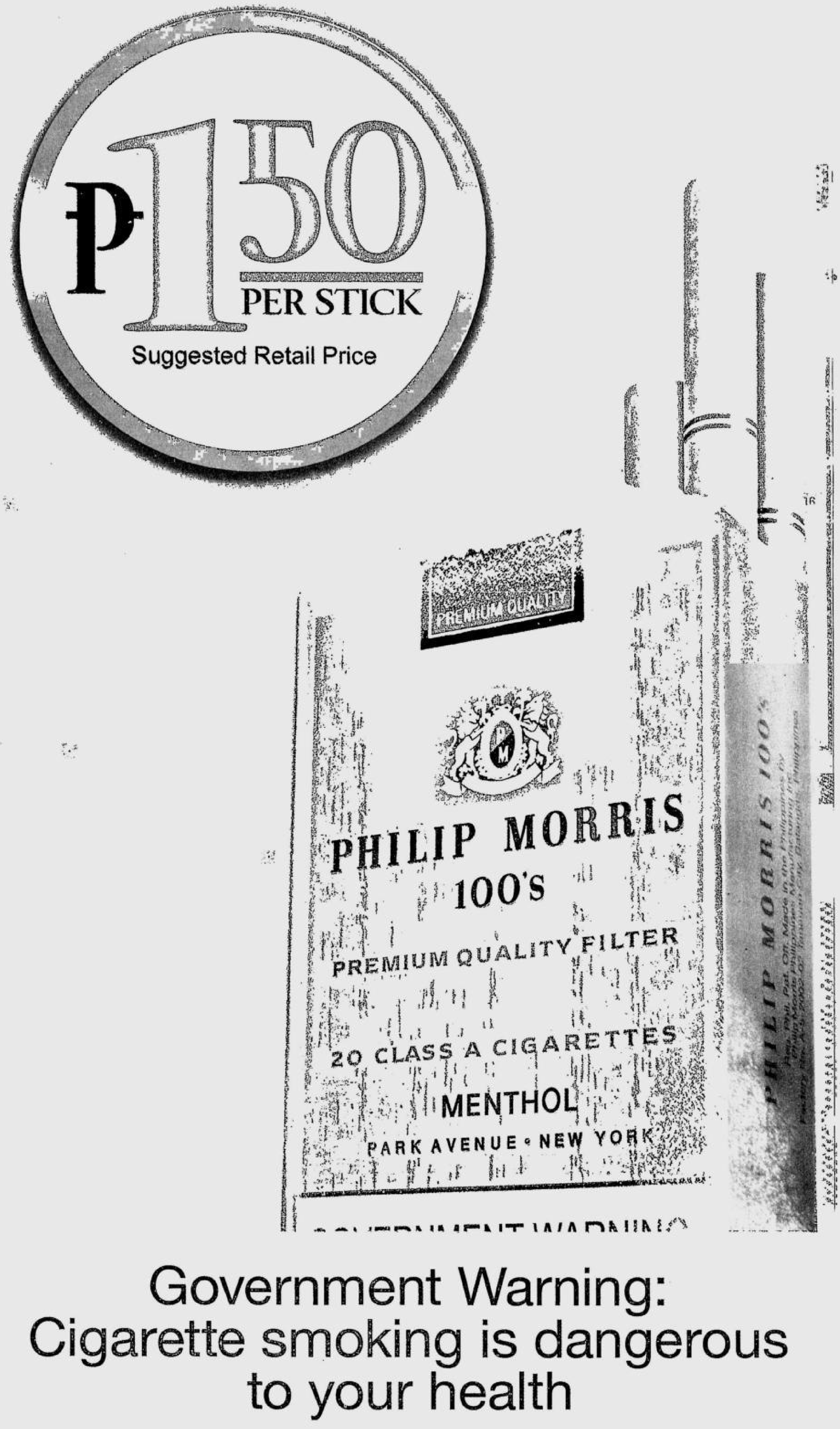
Jesus called them to him and began teaching them by means of stories or parables, "How can Satan drive out Satan? If a nation is divided by civil war, that nation cannot stand. If a family divides itself into groups, that family will not survive. In the same way, if Satan has risen against himself and is divided, he will not stand; he is finished. No one can break into the house of the Strong one in order to plunder his goods, unless he first ties up the Strong one. Then indeed, he can plunder his house.

"Truly, I say to you, every sin will be forgiven humankind, even insults to God, however numerous. But whoever slanders the Holy Spirit will never be forgiven: He carries the guilt of his sin forever."

This was their sin when they said, "He has an evil spirit in him."

Commentary

Jesus is besieged by those who resist his words and actions, and the people accuse him of being possessed by Beelzebul, a name for Satan (the Hinderer). But Jesus is clear about who he is and what he is doing: He is the strong man and his house is protected—no one enters who is not restrained and bound. Jesus unbinds those who have sinned and are asking for forgiveness. He holds bound those who do evil, injustice, violence, sin, and restrains their power over others. Their sin was to refuse to believe in forgiveness and the presence of God among them—in the Spirit and Word of Jesus. Is that our sin too? Do we live, and seek to resist and restrain evil, be forgiving and live in the house of the strong man Jesus?



Encounters result in 6 suspected NPAs, one soldier killed in Luzon

By Delfin T. Mallari Jr.
Inquirer Southern Luzon

LUCENA CITY—SIX SUSPECTED COMMUNIST insurgents and one Army soldier were killed over the past three days in a series of encounters in the Southern Tagalog and Bicol regions that also uncovered caches of explosives and extortion letters intended to be used against politicians seeking to campaign in the congressional and local elections in May, military spokespersons reported yesterday.

Five soldiers were also reported wounded in the gun battles between government troops and New People's Army guerrillas in the vicinity of Buenavista town in the Bondoc Peninsula and Pilar town, north of Legazpi City on Saturday, and in remote areas of Sariaya in Quezon province on Thursday.

Lt. Col. Roderick Parayno of the military's Southern Luzon Command based in Camp Nakar said they recovered several caches of explosives and ammunition from the rebels in Buenavista town after a fierce battle that left one unidentified NPA rebel and one soldier dead. Another soldier was wounded.

The names of the dead and wounded members of the 74th Infantry Battalion, which encountered the Bondoc Peninsula rebels, were being withheld pending notification of their respective families.

Further south, near Legazpi City, soldiers reported that they overran a communist camp in the outskirts of Pilar town before dawn on Saturday, killing five rebels. A military statement claimed five dead guerrillas were seen being dragged away by their comrades as they fled to the hills.

Four soldiers were reported wounded in the encounter that led to the recovery of Claymore mines, bags of ammonium nitrate used in making explosives, hundreds of rounds of ammunition, food taken from nearby communities, as well as extortion letters intended for politicians.

More explosives were recovered last Thursday during a raid on a rebel lair near Sariaya town in Quezon Province.

Parayno said the cache consisted of six antipersonnel mines, three HBX-1 demolition blocks, one detonating cord and one firing mechanism.

Lt. Gen. Alexander Yano, Solcom chief, said the NPA's strongest front in the Bondoc Peninsula, called Guerrilla Front #41, was "nearing collapse" after three of its leaders were slain last year.

Solcom reported that a total of 171 suspected communist rebels in the Southern Tagalog and Bicol regions had been "neutralized"—50 NPA rebels killed; 76 captured and 45 surrendered to the military.

On the other hand, the military suffered 19 casualties and another 60 troopers wounded in 111 anti-insurgency operations last year.

President Macapagal-Arroyo has renewed her instructions to defeat the communist insurgency by 2010 when her term expires. *With AFP reports*

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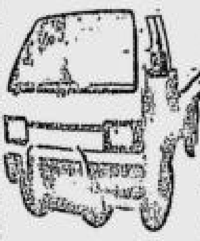

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Cops charge human rights groups padding dead list

By Vincent Cabreza
Inquirer Northern Luzon

BAGUIO CITY—WITH INTERNATIONAL CONcern over political killings in the Philippines rising, Cordillera region police charged human rights groups with padding their list with fictitious names.

Senior Supt. Joseph Adnol, Cordillera police spokesperson, said they had reviewed the list of 20 murder cases submitted by the Cordillera Human Rights Alliance and found that 11 people "do not exist."

In a press statement from Camp Dangwa, police said "exhaustive verification [has] confirmed that no [individuals] named Dali Kahar, Bra Ultog, Mia Jimenez, Loida Grado, Christopher Grado, Bernabe Banguey, Michael Zoilo, Manbusan Mandahugan, Matas Embas, Gabino Lawaguey and Bernabe Banguey were listed in the local registries or with the National Statistics Office. Police investigators concluded that "these individuals are still alive and that some [murder reports] did not actually happen."

But the Cordillera Human Rights Alliance was standing by its list.

Beverly Longid, chair of the Cordillera People's Alliance, said the murders involved "indigenous Filipinos with little or no public record."

"Dropping (these cases) from [active police files] because they have no birth certificates or marriage certificates is sloppy police work," she said, adding that "many of these murders had been traced to military operations."

Camp Dangwa did acknowledge some of the killings.

Police said soldiers mistook Johnson Cammareg, a farmer from Mountain Province, for a communist guerrilla and shot him in August 2001. The military settled the case out of court.

Police records also included the accidental shooting of 19-year-old hunter Efren Agsayang by policemen chasing gunmen involved in a payroll heist of a mining company in Mankayan, Benguet.

Police also recorded the murder of Kalinga hunter Victor Bala-is by soldiers from the 77th Infantry Battalion in September 2003. The case is still being heard by a local court.

Meanwhile, in San Fernando City, a militant farmers organization said it had uncovered a military briefing paper that confirmed the government's plan to discredit seven legitimate party-list groups by branding them as communist fronts.

Danilo Ramos, secretary general of the Kilusang Magbubukid ng Pilipinas, said a document titled, "Ending Four Decades of Communist Rebellion: RP Government's Counter-insurgency Thrusts," did not name the party-list groups but alluded to them when it cited "rebellion charges filed against six party-list leaders who conspired with the Magdalo group in an ouster plan."

Ramos said the KMP obtained a copy of the document, dated May 5, 2006, from "a disgruntled AFP officer."

But Lt. Gen. Romeo Tolentino, Army chief, said he had not seen or heard of such a document. "I do not think it is genuine." *With reports from Tonette Orejas, Inquirer Central Luzon*

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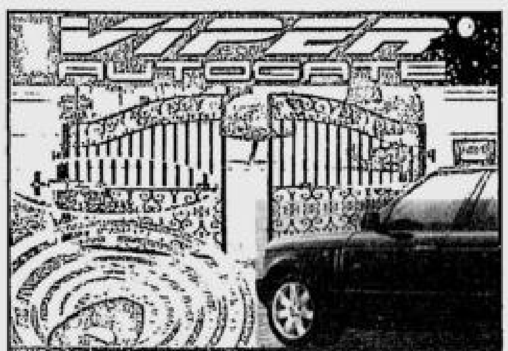

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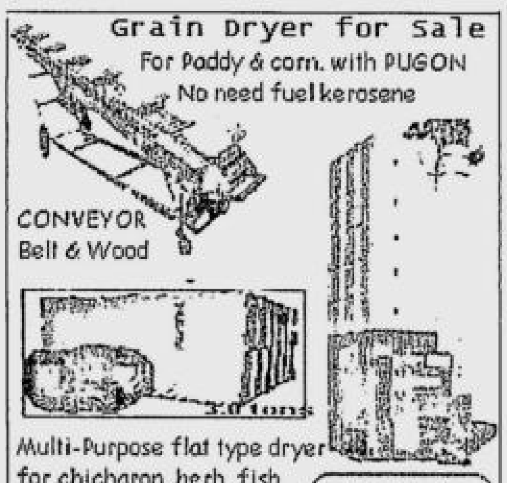

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Hillary makes US presidential race most exciting in history

From page A1

saying he had formed a committee to test the waters and start raising money.

With the entry of Clinton and Obama, the field of confirmed Democratic hopefuls expanded to seven, still 12 months ahead of the first crucial state-based primary elections that will decide the Democratic and Republican party nominees who will battle for the White House in November 2008.

Front-runner

Clinton, 59, a senator from New York and wife of former President Bill Clinton, ended years of speculation over her political ambitions with her announcement.

"The front-runner has just stepped on the stage," Washington's veteran political analyst Charlie Cook said.

"This is the first woman in our history who will be taken seriously by everyone," political scientist Ruth Mandel of Rutgers University added.

But while polls showed Clinton the odds-on favorite to capture the Democratic nomination next year, her continuing ability to divide voters meant that the race was still wide open—with Obama, former Senator Edwards and others yet to commit to the race angling to demonstrate they have a better chance to defeat the Republican challenger.

In a Washington Post-ABC News poll of voters surveyed before her announcement, Clinton outpaced Obama 41 percent to 17 in the contest for the Democratic nomination.

Likewise, a Gallup poll taken a week ago put Clinton ahead with a 29-percent backing from Democratic voters, compared with Obama with 18 percent and Edwards at 13 percent.

But questions remain over whether Clinton, whose eight years as an untraditional first lady behind her husband left a large swath of US voters cold, can defeat any politician the Republicans choose to fight for the White House.

Big weakness

A CBS News poll at the beginning of January pointed to a big weakness by Clinton—38 percent of all voters, and a whopping 78 percent of Republicans, have decidedly unfavorable feelings toward Clinton, suggesting that, in a country closely divided between the two parties, she might not have the ability to woo the Republicans necessary for a decisive victory in 2008.

Indeed, a Newsweek poll released on Saturday suggested that Edwards, the vice presidential running mate of John Kerry in their ill-fated campaign for the White House in 2004, could be the Democrats' best bet.

Asking voters their preference in certain match-ups, Newsweek reported that Clinton, if she runs against Republican Sen. John McCain, would narrowly come out ahead, 48 percent to 47 percent.

In an Obama-versus-McCain scenario, the Democrat carried 46 percent against McCain's 44 percent. But Edwards trumped McCain 48 percent versus 43 percent.

Measured against current leading Republican contender Rudy Giuliani, a former New York mayor, Clinton came out a percentage point behind and Obama was two points behind. But Edwards held a 48-45 percent lead over Giuliani.

Obama

That did not mean Obama should be ruled out. He only burst on the national scene in 2004, but since then, with inspirational oratory and an easy smile, has carved out an image as a pivotal cross-cultural figure and the voice of a newer generation.

"He does fit America's image of itself," political scientist Larry Sabato said. "He's young, charismatic, optimistic, diverse—America is no longer going to be a white majority country by 2050."

No one is dismissing the possibility of someone else charging to the forefront either. *AFP*

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Adopted, this 11th day of January, 2007.

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List of US politicians out to succeed Bush

WASHINGTON—FOLLOWING IS a list of US politicians who have officially declared or are widely expected to declare their intention to run for the White House. Some have taken the key step of forming "exploratory committees" that allows them to begin raising funds for the race.

The Democratic and Republican candidates out to succeed Republican President George W. Bush, who after two four-year terms cannot seek reelection, will be decided in state primary and caucus votes beginning next January.

Republicans

The following Republicans have either officially declared their intention to run or formed exploratory committees.

- Arizona Sen. John McCain, 70, a Vietnam War hero who lost to Bush in the 2000 Republican primaries, has a reputation for independence and favors a US troop buildup in Iraq.
- Rudolph Giuliani, 62, is a former New York City mayor who enjoys strong popularity in opinion polls, in part for guiding New York's response to the Sept. 11, 2001, terror attacks on the World Trade Center.
- Former Massachusetts Gov. Mitt Romney, 59, is credited with rescuing the 2002 Winter Olympics in Salt Lake City, Utah, from scandal and mismanagement. The Boston businessman is a devout Mormon.
- Kansas Sen. Sam Brownback, 50, is a devout Roman Catholic who enjoys strong support from religious conservatives.
- Duncan Hunter, 58, is a former chair of the House armed services committee, who takes a conservative line, particularly against illegal immigration.
- Colorado Rep. Tom Tancredo, 61, is known for his tough stance against illegal immigration.
- Tommy Thompson, 65, is a former secretary of health and human services in the Bush administration.

Expected to join race

The following Republicans have not declared their candidacy but are widely reported to be considering a run:

- Nebraska Sen. Chuck Hagel, 60, is a moderate Republican and a vocal critic of the US handling of the war in Iraq.
- Newt Gingrich, 63, is a former speaker of the House of Representatives and a free-market liberal.

Democrats

The following Democrats have either officially declared their intentions to run or formed exploratory committees:

- New York Sen. Hillary Clinton, 59, is a strong favorite for the Democratic Party nomination. She has already surrounded herself with a team of experienced advisers, including her husband, former President Bill Clinton, and many political heavyweights from his administration.
- Illinois Sen. Barack Obama, 45, is considered the first African-American to have a serious chance of winning the presidency. Charismatic and telegenic, he has begun a round of visits to key battleground states.
- John Edwards, 53, is a former senator and John Kerry's vice presidential running mate in the 2004 presidential election. Edwards is a populist trial lawyer who has nurtured his support base in key states for party primary races, such as Iowa and South Carolina.
- Tom Vilsack, 56, is a former two-term governor of Iowa, where the first caucus to choose candidates in the presidential race will be held in January 2008.
- Ohio Rep. Dennis Kucinich, 60, is a pacifist who promotes social issues and embodies the party's left wing. He was a Democratic contender in 2004 but garnered only minimal backing.
- Delaware Sen. Joseph Biden, 64, the powerful centrist chair of the Senate foreign relations committee, is an attorney and law professor who was first elected to the US Senate in 1972, when he was just 29 years old.
- Connecticut Sen. Chris Dodd, 62, a senior Democrat in the Senate, is an old hand in foreign affairs. He was first elected to Congress in 1974, serving for six years in the House of Representatives before being elected to the Senate in 1980.

Considering a run

The following Democrats have not declared their candidacy but are widely reported to be considering a run:

- New Mexico Gov. Bill Richardson, 59, is a former energy secretary in the Clinton administration and a former US ambassador to the United Nations. He has also lent his negotiating expertise to talks with North Korea and efforts to resolve the Darfur conflict. If elected, he would be the first Hispanic US president.
- Wesley Clark, 62, a former supreme allied commander of Nato in Europe, could launch another campaign after his failed attempt in 2004.
- Al Gore, 58, Clinton's vice president, was defeated by Bush in the 2000 election. He feebly denied having any presidential aspirations after the success of "An Inconvenient Truth," his documentary on global warming, leaving open the possibility that he will join the race.
- Massachusetts Sen. John Kerry, 63, is a Vietnam War veteran who already has plenty of experience running for president, having lost the 2004 election to Bush. He has said he would soon announce his plans for the 2008 election. *AFP*

Get out of our faces, pay panels tell solons

By Leila B. Salaverria

STOP DOING OUR job.

This was the message five of the country's Regional Tripartite Wages and Productivity Boards gave to lawmakers urging them to leave to the board the job mandated to them by the law of setting workers' salaries.

The wage boards signed resolutions asking the legislators to reconsider their support for the P125-across-the-board daily salary increase recently passed by the House of Representatives, saying this would worsen the socioeconomic situation in their respective areas.

They said that under the law, they are tasked with setting the minimum wage as well as non-wage benefits like relief from taxes and increasing state and health insurance coverages and benefits.

The boards that issued resolutions were those in the Ilocos, Mimaropa (Mindoro, Marinduque, Romblon, Palawan), Central Visayas, Northern Mindanao and Caraga (Agusan del Norte, Agusan del Sur, Surigao del Norte and del Sur) regions.

Labor Secretary Arturo Brion, who earlier said he would recommend that the President veto the bill, backed the wage boards, saying they knew how much the workers should be receiving given their close dealings with employers and their employees.

A wage board is composed of representatives from the government, labor and business sectors.

"They know exactly what the sentiments in the regional level are, particularly the prevailing economic conditions in their respective areas," Brion said.

On the other hand, a militant fisherfolk group called on the Senate to pass its counterpart bill on the P125 pay increase, saying the politicians' futures depended on their positions on the issue.

Senators are morally obliged to side with the workers and uphold the increase approved by the House if they want to be relevant to majority of Filipinos, the Pambansang Lakas ng Kilusang Mamamalakaya ng Pilipinas (Pamalakaya) said.

Earlier, Malacañang said it was hopeful Congress would approve the bill increasing the salaries of over one million state workers by 10 percent before the legislators go on recess at the end of February.

Mirant workers restive

LUCENA CITY—FOLlowing the sale of Mirant Philippines to the consortium of Tokyo Electric Power Co. Inc. and Marubeni Corp., the more than 1,000 Filipino workers of the company have grown restive over their job security.

"We don't know what will happen to us next. The management of Mirant Philippines has kept on evading all the issues surrounding the status of our employment," said a Mirant Pagbilao plant worker who asked not to be named for security reasons.

The employee said the former management snubbed the scheduled dialogue last Friday at the Department of Labor and Employment.

"Only our representatives showed up at the DOLE. The Mirant management did not attend. How can they pacify the restiveness of the workers when they are evading us?" the worker said.

Mirant employs 1,200 Filipino workers of whom at least 400 are assigned to the Pagbilao power plant in Quezon province.

The workers lamented that President Macapagal-Arroyo had not lifted a finger to help them in their plight. *Delfin T. Mallari Jr., Inquirer Southern Luzon*

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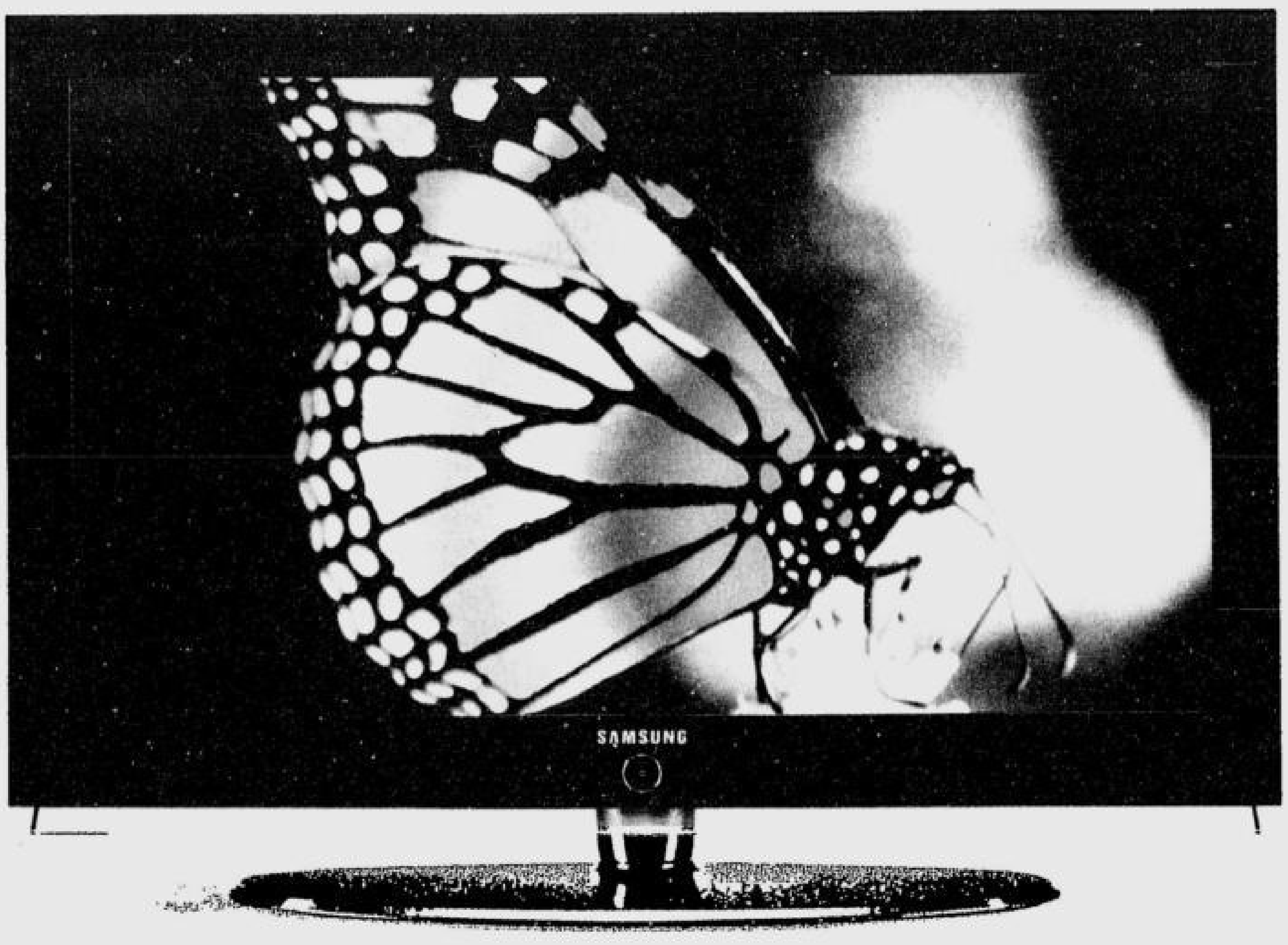

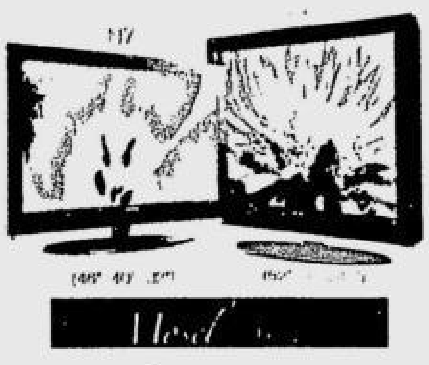
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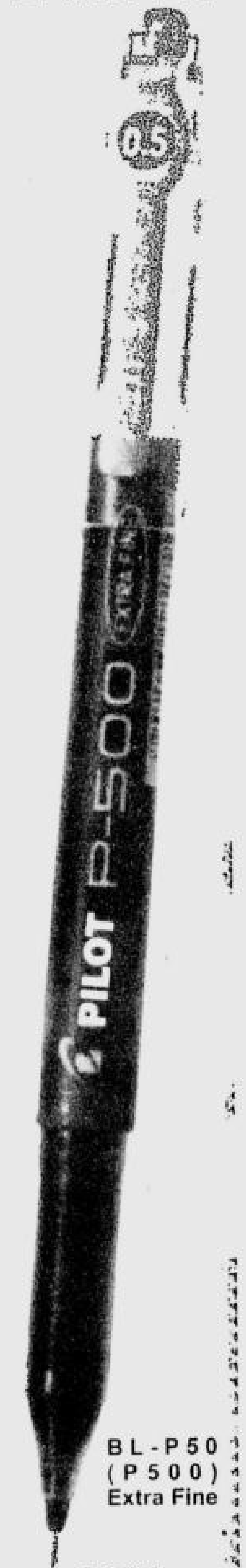

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Is there no one else?

EDITORIAL

THE MID-TERM ELECTIONS IN MAY PROVIDE the public with the opportunity to resolve the President's crisis of legitimacy one way or another. They also give the public the chance to pass its collective judgment, depending on how election issues will be framed, on related matters such as Charter change.

These make-or-break stakes, however, seem far removed from the current concerns of the opposition. We understand that, in politics, the logistics of winning sometimes trumps platform and principle. But the opposition's emphasis on filling a Senate slate to the liking of deposed President Joseph Estrada (as against, say, planning to win at least one-third of House seats outright) strikes us as especially unfortunate.

To appropriate the question Marinduque Rep. Edmundo Reyes raised—to dramatic effect but without any discernible practical result—during the first impeachment case against President Macapagal-Arroyo: Is there no one else?

We ask: Is there no one else besides Estrada who has the political and financial capital to broker opposition unity?

We do not begrudge Estrada his quick-off-the-mark attempt to put together a single opposition Senate slate; he has all the right (and in the confines of his Tanay estate, where he is under house arrest, also all the time) to talk strategy.

But the high profile he has earned and the first-mover advantage he now enjoys work to disguise the limits of his influence. In other words, the coattails of a non-candidate are short indeed.

Yes, association with Estrada can help one get elected to the Senate—but only if one's surname is Estrada too or Ejercito. His name has given both his wife and his first-born son the gift of a Senate seat, but who can seriously argue that, say, big-spending Jamby Madrigal or already-popular Fred Lim owe their Senate positions to the Man in Tanay?

Recent history provides the opposition with an alternative: Consider, for instance, the example of the Convenor Group, which did the yeoman's work of forging opposition unity before the snap elections in 1986.

We ask: Is there no one else aside from former Sen. Ernesto Maceda who can chair a news briefing for the so-called united opposition?

Maceda, to belabor the obvious, is a man of great political experience. Unfortunately for him—and despite an apparent religious conversion that took place just before the 2004 elections—that experience is no longer seen as a source of advantage. For those old enough, Maceda personifies politics—as-usual, compromised in the exact same way that ex-Sen. John Osmeña has been compromised: He has jumped one too many political fences. For those who are voting for the first time, Maceda is perceived as a ghostly specter out of the past, an object of some curiosity but not a figure of authority.

Recent history provides the opposition with many young, fresh faces to choose from. Consider the lions of the two impeachment episodes; they were outfought in the first and outnumbered in the second, but at least they seem to promise a future, instead of a mere return to the inglorious past.

We ask: Is there no one else who sees the wisdom in the late Fernando Poe Jr.'s admittedly simplistic approach to politics? Avoid being seen in the company of politicians. From the declaration of his candidacy until the start of the official campaign period (that is, when he could no longer avoid doing so), the image-conscious Poe studiously avoided any public contact with veteran politicians. (Behind the scenes, of course, it was an entirely different thing.)

On stage, even while he shared the spotlight with politicians galore, he seemed to cultivate some distance; indeed, the place of honor for his campaign rallies was reserved not for a political luminary but for another Filipino movie icon: Eddie Garcia. Garcia **always** spoke **after** Poe.

Perhaps Poe was responding to the public's unspoken need: No more politics, or at least no to politics-as-usual. In the three years since the last elections, that need can only have deepened. That approach can only work better.

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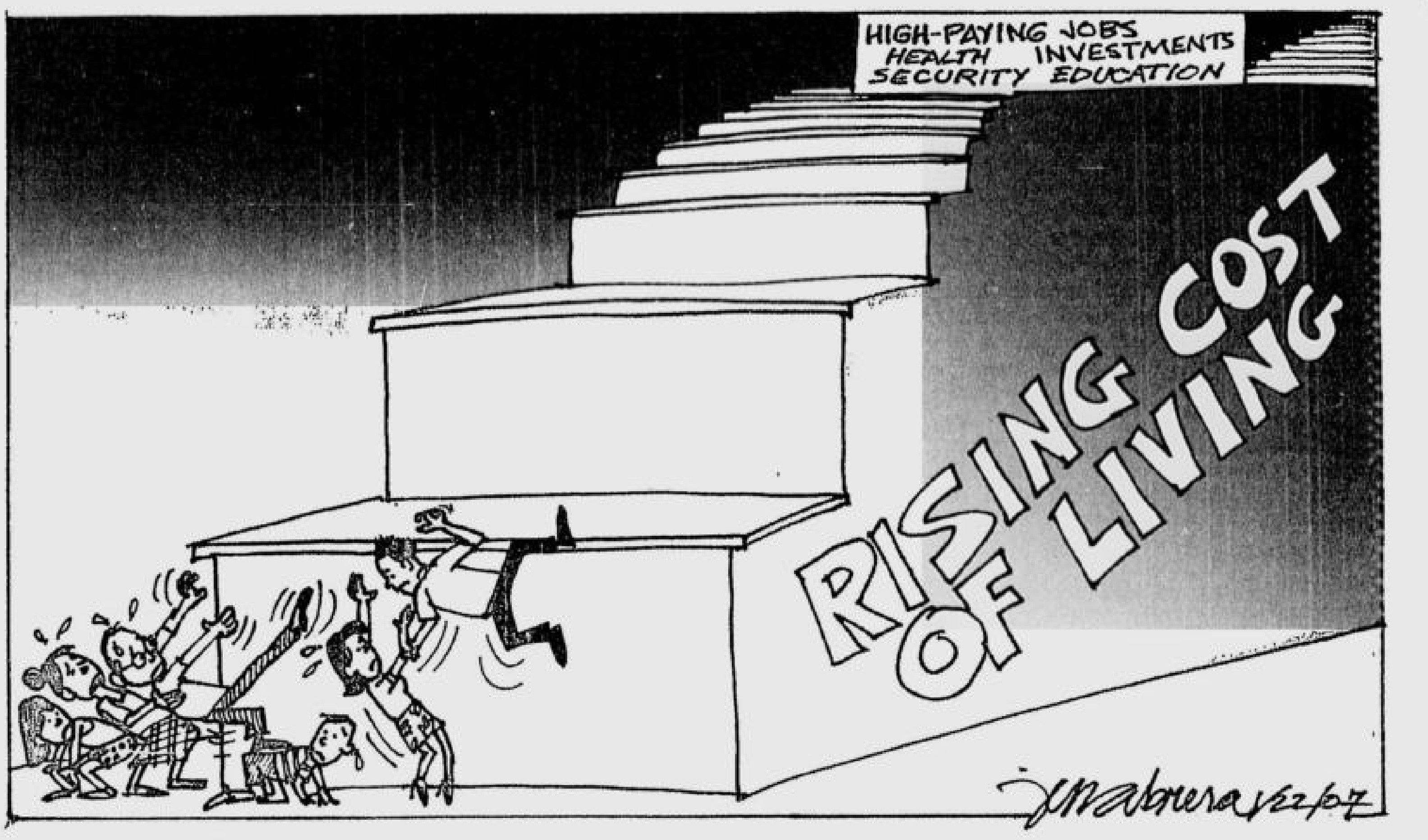

Is SC sitting on election case in Legazpi?

AS I SEE IT

Neal H. Cruz

THE SUPREME COURT IS SUPPOSED TO BE the champion of justice.

Citizens who feel that they are being denied justice can run to it for relief. Supposed to be. But sometimes it is the Supreme Court itself that unwittingly lends itself to a denial of justice. Take this case:

Having won the election protest against Mayor Noel E. Rosal, Michael Imperial has been declared by the Commission on Elections—the Second Division and en banc—as the duly elected city mayor of Legazpi City. That was eight months ago. But until now Imperial cannot assume his position because the Supreme Court is sitting on the case. Only five months are left of the term. Will the elected mayor be denied his due? Will the high court let the term expire before it bestirs itself and hands down its decision on the case? Or will this be another one of those *consuelo de bobo* cases where the winner is given a week or three days to sit as the elected official before the term expires? Where is justice there?

The election period for the May election started last Jan. 14. All election cases in the Comelec are supposed to be finished by that time. But the Supreme Court takes its own sweet time. It does not march to the beat of the rest of the world.

The Philippine justice system works in favor of election cheats. Never mind if they are caught cheating. The priority objective is to be proclaimed the elected official. Once the cheat is proclaimed, the cheated candidate faces a difficult, expensive and long, uphill battle.

The recount takes a very long, laborious process with lawyers arguing endlessly over minor things, the intent of the defense being to delay the case as long as possible.

Even if the cheat is eventually declared by the Comelec as the loser, he can appeal to the courts, which will then go through another long process to review the case.

During all this time, the cheat sits on the position he has stolen, collecting all the salaries, allowances and other emoluments that do not belong to him. And he performs official functions that he has no right of performing. His victim, meanwhile, sits outside, looking in and counting the long days and the money he has to spend to keep the election protest going. It is like waging a second expensive campaign—the first to win the election; the second to be able to sit on the seat he had won.

When the courts eventually declare him the winner, what does he get? A few days to sit as mayor or congressman, and to collect the pittance left of the salary and allowances. And the cheat? He had already run laughing all the way to the bank with the money that did not rightfully belong to him.

This process in the justice system encourages cheating.

I suggest that a law be passed to end this irregularity. When a preliminary investigation shows there is merit in an election protest, the emoluments for the position should be frozen. At the end of the case, they will be given to who is declared the winner. That should discourage cheats, as they will get little if they are found out; and that should compensate their victims, who deserve to get the emoluments that rightfully belong to them.

But back to the Rosal vs Imperial case. Here is a background:

Rosal was declared the elected mayor of Legazpi City on May 16, 2004, with 44,792 votes over Imperial's 33,747 votes.

On July 6, 2004, Imperial filed an election protest with the Comelec. The Comelec proceeded with the re-appreciation of ballots.

On Jan. 23, 2006, the Comelec's Second Division declared Imperial as the winning candidate and ordered Rosal to vacate the Office of the Mayor of Legazpi.

The case was elevated to the Comelec en banc which affirmed the decision of the Second Division on May 29, 2006. Rosal appealed to the Supreme Court. And there it slept.

It is difficult to understand why the tribunal is taking that long to decide on the case, which is urgent because the term of the mayor is about to expire. It could be due to plain oversight or laziness, or it could be deliberate.

No question of law is involved in the case and the Supreme Court is not a trier of facts. The resolution of the Comelec en banc shows that the contested ballots were examined and re-appreciated, and the findings and conclusions were graphically illustrated.

Rosal is asking the tribunal to weigh the evidence all over again and re-examine the factual findings of the Comelec. No question of law is in fact involved.

The Supreme Court itself in Punzalan vs Comelec (289 SCRA 702) has held that:

"The appreciation of the contested ballots and election documents involves a question of fact best left to the determination of the Comelec, a specialized agency tasked with the supervision of elections all over the country."

It has been a long-established doctrine that "findings of facts of administrative bodies charged with their specific field of expertise, are afforded great weight by the courts ... and in the interest of stability of the government structure, should not be disturbed." (Ocampo vs Comelec, 325 SCRA 636)

Moreover, no grave abuse of discretion has been committed by the Comelec in issuing the questioned resolution declaring that Imperial won with a lead of 11,045 votes. Rosal's argument that such a sizable number of ballots could not have been tampered with does not correspond to the realities present during elections. This is not the first time that the Comelec had nullified a substantial number of ballots on the basis of their having been written by the same persons.

Six years and two days

THERE'S THE RUB

Conrado de Quiros

TODAY IS NOT A RED-LETTER DATE IN THE calendar, but it is a red-letter date in the mind. Today, Jan. 22, 2007, Gloria Macapagal-Arroyo will have been in Malacañang for six years and two days. She was sworn into office by Hilario Davide on Jan. 20, 2001.

The only one who has served longer than GMA since 1986 is Corazon Aquino. Cory was president from Feb. 25 1986 to end of May 1992, a total of six years and three months. Since you can safely bet your life and those of your children and children's children that GMA will not be hit by a thunderbolt of enlightenment and give up power willingly three months from now, by end of April this year, GMA will have occupied Malacañang the longest since Ferdinand Marcos. Don't worry, I'll remind you of it this April. But for the nonce, today, Jan. 22, GMA has occupied Malacañang longer than any of the elected presidents of this country.

As I said last December, that is one for Ripley's. GMA will have been president of this country longer than any elected president of this country since 1986 without having been elected president of this country.

Cory herself wasn't. Or at least it's debatable whether she won the snap elections or not. In any case, the snap elections were the dirtiest in local politics up to that time, which voided them completely. The record would be broken only in 2004 when the incumbent would steal the votes wholesale. But quite apart from that, Cory's legitimacy did not owe to the elections. It owed to a far more direct and elemental expression of the sovereign will. That was People Power.

Throughout her term, Cory would never be bothered by widespread—or near-universal—perception, of being an illegitimate ruler. Other than from completely delusional military upstarts and one Ponce Enrile who imagined themselves the true authors of Edsa. On the contrary, Cory would have both the moral and legal right to be president. Morally, she was the one who inspired, gave shape to and led the struggle that resulted in People Power. She was the heart of People Power, a fact the coup plotters could challenge only by arms and not by principle. Legally, well, it was more than that she was proclaimed president of this country at Club Filipino following all the protocols of law; it was that she was recognized so by all the world, a fact that would be upheld by the conscience of the human race, specifically by other peoples' efforts to duplicate People Power elsewhere.

If GMA's legitimacy is less than tenuous, never mind ironclad, only Raul Gonzalez knows about it. Throughout her term—whose expiry date lapsed long, long ago—she would never be seen as having the moral and legal right to rule. She was not a leader of Edsa II, she was a side effect of Edsa II—one that would completely reverse its curative powers. Morally, well, the very word would be anathema to her rule. Legally, she would proclaim herself president while the country slept, only to be slapped in the face a year later by the sound of two words. Those two words would ring—quite literally in cell phones—deafeningly across the land. They were "Hello" and "Garci."

Different folks, different strokes; different natures, different futures. For those who think legitimacy is a small matter, one that should be superseded by more important ones, think again.

Because Cory was legitimate, she went about restoring the foundations of democracy, or at least the kind of democracy we paradoxically, though quite accurately, call "elite democracy." Though her rule was marred by humongous corruption and human rights violations, she gave the democratic institutions the space and nourishment they needed to assert themselves. And affirming in the end that it was those institutions—and not any savior, real or self-advertised—that assured this country of a future, she willingly gave up power in 1992.

Because GMA is fake, she has restored the foundations of dictatorship, the barbed wire rolled out across the country now showing visibly amid the cover of elections. What's the point of elections where, as in Marcos' time, the results will be counted by people who do not know how to count? Indeed, what's the point of elections when elected officials can be booted out later on some pretext or another? Force is the handmaiden of illegitimacy, coercion the natural reflex of usurpation.

There's a difference even in the corruption. The corruption during Cory's, Ramos' and Erap's time merely meant the theft of the nation's body. The corruption during Marcos' and GMA's time meant the theft of the nation's soul. The latter is corruption in the deepest sense of the word—in the sense of things decaying and rotting. We are not just seeing the plunder of the nation's wealth, we are seeing the plunder of the nation's values. As in Marcos' time, we now live in a world where right is wrong and wrong is right, where evil is rewarded and good punished, where honesty is a crime and lying a claim to the crown.

The story is told that when Cory went to Ramos' inauguration in June 1992, she insisted on riding on the family-owned Toyota Crown instead of the Malacañang-issued Mercedes-Benz and stopping on red in intersections notwithstanding that it was a security nightmare, to show the world that she was now just Citizen Cory. I don't know about you, but I can't see that the official Mercedes-Benz will be the only thing GMA will be loath to part with in June 2010. You've been president longer than any other president of this country since 1986 without ever having been elected president, what's to prevent you from wanting—and having—more?

Today, thanks to the stupidity of Filipinos, Gloria Macapagal-Arroyo has been in Malacañang for six years and two days. And counting....

Davide's ad interim appointment

SOUNDING BOARD

Fr. Joaquin G. Bernas, S.J.

THERE REALLY IS NOTHING UNUSUAL ABOUT ad interim appointments. And there should be nothing unusual about the ad interim appointment of former Chief Justice Hilario Davide as ambassador to the United Nations. But, I guess, what is significant is that Davide presided at the impeachment trial of President Joseph Estrada and administered the oath of office on Gloria Macapagal-Arroyo as successor to President Estrada. These facts make him memorable in the mind of Estrada's son who is a member of the Commission on Appointments. But let us just look at the legalities of the matter.

First, what are ad interim appointments?

There are certain important government offices, an appointment to which normally needs confirmation by the Commission on Appointments. But the Commission on Appointments operates only when Congress is in session. The Constitution therefore has provided for situations when vacancies must be filled while Congress is in recess.

When the Constitutional Commission of 1986 was deliberating on the appointment power of the President, the original proposal on the subject did not contain a provision for appointments during congressional recess. But when it was remembered that the 1935 Constitution had such provision, an addition was introduced. It now reads: "The President shall have the power to make appointments during the recess of the Congress, whether voluntary or compulsory, but such appointments shall be effective only until disapproval by the Commission on Appointments or until the next adjournment of the Congress." This is the power which the President exercised when she appointed and swore in former Chief Justice Davide as ambassador to the United Nations.

What is the nature of such an appointment? Jurisprudence is now very clear on the subject. In terms of legitimacy, it is as good as an appointment confirmed by the Commission on Appointments. As the Supreme Court put it in a 1948 decision: "An ad interim appointment is one made in pursuance of paragraph (4), Section 10, Article VII of the [1935] Constitution, which provides that the 'President shall have the power to make appointments during the recess of the Congress, but such appointments shall be effective only until disapproval by the Commission on Appointments or until the next adjournment of the Congress.' **It is an appointment permanent in nature, and the circumstance that it is subject to confirmation by the Commission on Appointments does not alter its permanent character.**"

The current Supreme Court confirmed this in 2002 saying: "The Constitution imposes no condition on the effectivity of an ad interim appointment, and thus an ad interim appointment takes effect immediately. **The appointee can at once assume office and exercise, as a *de jure* officer, all the powers pertaining to the office.**"

I understand that the appointment of Davide will be challenged or has now been challenged in the United Nations itself. I believe that such a challenge is an exercise in futility and can only embarrass the challenger. I do not anticipate that anything will come out of that challenge. International authorities accept the legality of decisions of *de jure* local authorities within their jurisdiction under what is known in law as the "act of state doctrine."

There are only two ways in which an ad interim appointment may be terminated. First, it is terminated when Congress bypasses it, that is, when Congress adjourns without any action on the subject by the Commission on Appointments. But then, if so bypassed, the President can renew the ad interim appointment. There is no constitutional limit on the number of renewals.

Second, it is terminated when disapproved by the commission. Disapproval is the definitive signal that the appointment should end and not be renewed.

What are the chances of a disapproval of Davide's appointment? It seems to me that, the fact that the appointment has been sitting there without unfavorable action may be an indication that the majority of the commission does not intend to disapprove it. But why is it not being approved? What does it take to approve it?

In the answer to this question, we see how politicians behave. The law on the subject is that the commission, by constitutional command, acts by a majority vote. This means that a majority vote of "Yes" or a majority vote of "No" should end the suspense. The Senate president presides over a body of 12 senators and 12 representatives. If the body does not vote to disapprove and neither votes to approve, it can only mean that the body wants to approve but does not wish to displease a commission member or some other influential person. So no action is taken and meanwhile the officer stays in office. Would you call that a win-win situation? Alas, the beauty of politics!

Silent bells

KRIS-CROSSING MINDANAO

Noralyn Mustafa

I WAKE UP AT 4:30 EVERY MORNING TO THE sound of the call to prayer from the mosque nearby, and after prayers I brew my second cup of coffee, clamber through the bedroom window to the roof of the dining room below where I wait for daybreak, something I would never want to miss.

After morning has broken, I go downstairs, switch on the TV in time for the "Front Page" segment of GMA-7's "Unang Hirit" to get a preview of the front pages of the day's newspapers; and after getting a summary of how the world is doing, I start my daily readings of what God has to say.

I read first the Koran and then the Bible, a few verses of one whole chapter each from both the Old and New Testaments. I always begin this daily reading with the Al Fatiha from the Koran and end it with the 91st Psalm.

As if on cue, the birds commence their early morning song. One of them is instantly recognizable; he has a distinct melody all his own and he sings it with such bravado, almost boastful, I have named him Pavarotti. Of course, I have listened to generations of Pavarottis, but it doesn't matter.

By this time, the morning sun has started to creep up on the garden, which very soon will be flooded in sunlight, bringing on the varied hues of the flowers, while casting a golden, dewy light on the green of the leaves and grass. That means it is time to visit the plants, remove dead leaves or pull out weeds while listening to the newscast.

And as it was meant to be, as if they are to perform the finale of this wondrous operetta, the butterflies come fluttering in, in different sizes, shapes and colors, and I thank God that I am alive and given another lovely day on this wonderful earth; and, almost instinctively, I hum, "Oh what a beautiful morning," from "Oklahoma."

You may think that this is as good as it gets. Well, not quite.

Because I omitted one detail from this picture of God's creation. I woke up to the call to prayer that was almost drowned out by the drone of an Air Force helicopter that had probably been hovering over us while we were sleeping. It was like a very early bird tracking down the lairs of the rats that infest our lush and fertile countryside, which is always referred to as "jungle" in news reports.

And it took a lot of will power, concentration and focus to shut off that whirring sound from my prayers, readings and the songs of the birds.

The remains of Abu Sayyaf commander Khadaffy Janjalani have been reportedly uncovered, and tissue and fluid samples have been taken from the dead body for DNA analysis. And countless people—both Christian and Muslim, and in particular those whose lives out of which he and his men had made a living nightmare, like kidnap victim Gracia Burnham—can now, it is hoped, move on as best as they can, though permanently scarred.

Janjalani had hundreds of millions of pesos in reward money on his head; so did Abu Solaiman, known as the "Engineer," who was killed last Tuesday in an encounter with government forces in Patikul.

Now the question is: will the decimation of the Abu Sayyaf's top leadership break up this kidnap-for-ransom terrorist group and eventually lead to its elimination? Or will other so-called commanders emerge and add new recruits to their numbers? And more importantly—what are they really fighting for?

Detractors of the military may joke that this will mean more millions in rewards for the military "assets" who helped in the capture of these leaders, dead or alive. But what the Abu Sayyaf is capable of doing is no joke. Because one insidious effect of its ideology—invisible in the statistics of camps raided, soldiers and Abu Sayyaf members slain in battle, mangled bodies in grenade blasts—has been eating away at the very foundations of our society, and the damage may be there long after the last Abu has been buried.

I did not mention earlier that at the same time I heard the call to prayer and the whir of the chopper, I heard Christmas carols being played from a Ray Conniff album, and I wondered why anyone would listen to Christmas carols at 4 in the morning.

My neighbor's son told me that at the residential area nearby, the houses of Christian residents were stoned whenever they played Christmas carols, so he played them while people were still asleep.

And here you don't hear church bells anymore. Not for Mass, not for weddings and funerals, not for Christmas.

A few months ago, an ice cream vendor was shot in the back of the head while he was pushing his cart, right across the street in front of my house. As we stood gathered around the body lying in a pool of blood, a woman beside me asked: "Why was he killed? He was a Muslim, a Tausug."

Sometime ago, a balloon vendor was shot near the main mosque, because he was a Christian and, therefore, was suspected as a spy for the military.

But there were Christians and Muslims among those who were blasted to death and injured in the bombing of a cooperative store. Bombs and grenades don't ask what your religion is.

In the latest edition of "Global Summit," CNN international bureau chief Christiane Amanpour closed the program with this line: "In any war fought in the name of God, there are no victors; only losers."

I disagree. No war has been fought in the name of God. All wars have been fought in the name of religion. Which was why John Lennon made us imagine a world where there is "no religion too."

He never said "imagine there's no God."

* * *

Comments to rubaiyat19@yahoo.com

'Half a People Power'

THE LONG VIEW

Manuel L. Quezon III

PEOPLE POWER IS A PHENOMENON THAT requires certain givens for it to be recognized as such and not as mob rule. The givens are: it must be anchored on moral outrage and principles; it must be peaceful; it must have wide support cutting across all classes and barriers of gender; it must be organized and yet, at the same time, be spontaneous.

In "Bayan Ko: Images of the Philippine Revolt," Guy Sacerdoti wrote a clear summation of what Edsa I was all about:

"The Philippine rebellion of February 1986 was a moral revolution more than anything else .... Desperate to retain the draconian powers he once had, Marcos was forcing the 'silent majority' he thought backed him to choose sides. Businessmen, priests, the usually conservative Church hierarchy and even the comfortable middle class were slowly realizing that the more radical way was the only way .... Marcos had violated popular sensibilities of what was acceptable behavior, even for Filipino politicians .... He would never accept that he was forcing the Filipino people into a corner .... A people's collective pride and morality were resoundingly offended."

Since 1986, two more mass protests have claimed the title of Edsa revolutions. The basic premises of each were different. The first Edsa was an effort to restore democracy after the regime in power was caught red-handed stuffing ballot boxes. The second Edsa was stymied by an administration legally—though no longer morally—entitled to stay in office, and which, by the social compact known as the Constitution, could only be removed according to certain procedures. Hence, the decision of the Edsa II majority—at least on the streets, if not in the secret rendezvous of the powerbrokers—to go for the forceful (but loyal to the Constitution) petitioning for President Joseph Estrada to resign. In one respect, Edsa II surpassed Edsa I: in peacefulness. There were no lynchings and deaths such as those that took place when Malacañang was finally seized by the people in 1986. But in one major respect Edsa II proved itself a fluke: both sides, it seems, were prepared to resort to the force of arms.

In his by-now-notorious interview with the late Nick Joaquin, the President's husband made this admission: at least from his point of view, what took place was a coup, not people power:

"Our group there was a back-up strike force. In fact, it was our group that won over to our side the PNP first. If Panfilo Lacson had resisted, he and his men would have been repelled: there would have been bloodshed, but not on Edsa. In every place where Erap loyalists had a force, we had a counter-force to face it, with orders to shoot. And not only in Metro Manila. Carillo had already been seht to the provinces; and in Nueva Ecija, for instance, we had Rabosa. This was a fight to the finish. That's why those five days that Erap was demanding were so important. He was counting on counter-coups and *baligtaran.*"

For a counter-coup to take place, a coup must first take place.

A fair conclusion to make, then, in comparing the two, is that Edsa I was the Edsa. Edsa II partook of the lessons of Edsa I and used many of its methods; it was also anchored on the same moral principles; but it was check-mated by the fact that what would work as a legitimate and moral objective in a popular revolt against a dictator could not be viewed as fully applicable to a constitutionally elected incumbent. That is why few doubted the legitimacy of Cory Aquino; that is why despite all the legal trappings of judicial, legislative and foreign recognition, the legitimacy of the Arroyo administration remains under clouds of doubt. Too much was said at the time it took power—and since—for everything to be swept under the rug and completely forgotten.

The methods and means of People Power were therefore present in Edsa II, but by failing to reach an ironclad and indisputable resolution (there was neither exile nor clear resignation for Estrada; and the toothpaste that was popular revolt had to be forced back into the tube that is the Constitution), Edsa II—a successful exercise in mass indignation not just in Metro Manila but also in Baguio, Lagazpi City, Puerto Princesa, Cagayan de Oro, Cebu, Iloilo, Marawi City, Jolo, Zamboanga City—perished at the door of legality. By this, I mean that People Power, as proven in the cases of Marcos and former Iron Curtain countries, is a phenomenon that can properly occur only where a complete political vacuum exists, that is, when a regime lacks legitimacy and moral authority. It only half-applied in the case of Estrada and so, it half-worked. And half a People Power, if there is such a thing, is not a complete People Power.

Yet, it was a proud moment for the Filipino; it was—despite the flawed nature of the resolution that took place in January 2001—an exercise in direct democracy, a ballot-less referendum.

In her blog (http://marichulambino.wordpress.com/), lawyer Marichu Lambino gave, perhaps, the most relevant reflection of all:

"I don't regret any day of [Edsa Dos] except one night of it; that night when we were getting information that the *trapos* of Gloria were negotiating with the *trapo* camp of Erap in Malacañang on the transfer of power to Gloria; regret for that night because for the entire year the movement and the agreements were founded on a leadership made up of people's organizations and civil society; and when [we were] going to move out to go to the Palace to stop the *trapos* from parceling the country, we were restrained from breaking away; there were negotiations. [T]hen at the break of day, we marched to the Palace. At mid-morning about 30,000 marchers met us on a bridge. And we ousted Erap; but his leaving had been the subject of negotiations before we got to the Palace and those negotiations would not have been possible without the people's marches."

'English First' policy will hurt learning

COMMENTARY

Juan Miguel Luz

THERE IS MUCH TO BE SAID ABOUT THE DECLINE IN English proficiency in this country. But legislating English as the medium of instruction—as proposed by the Gullas Bill—is **not** the solution. In fact not just English, but also Science and Math proficiency will decline should this law pass.

Rather than propose that English be the sole medium of learning, we should in fact promote multi-lingualism: English, Filipino and the local language or dialect.

The Japanese will never forego Nihonggo for English, nor will the Chinese abandon Mandarin or Cantonese for the so-called global language. Neither would the Scandinavians, Germans or (*mon Dieu!*) the French. Why then are we so quick to ditch Filipino for English?

The overall concern about the decline in English proficiency is both correct and misplaced. Many employers speak of job applicants with appalling spoken and written English skills. They argue that this deficiency is a "lost comparative advantage" as shown by the dismal hiring rates of the growing call center industry.

But is poor English proficiency really the cause of our global uncompetitiveness? Or is it our low productivity and the inability to deliver consistent quality that hurt us?

The problem is not poor English. It is poor English, **Science** and **Math** skills. Weak English proficiency is not the sole determinant of poor overall achievement; it is merely a factor.

Unesco findings show that young children learn how to read and acquire numeracy faster and better when taught in their mother tongue. Their achievement rates in higher-grade levels are better than those who are taught in a language other than what they speak at home.

These findings have been replicated by the Summer Institute of Linguistics (SIL), which uses the mother tongue for teaching young children in Bukidnon and in other areas with indigenous people. These pupils have had relatively high literacy and numeracy scores in DepEd (Department of Education) tests.

The TIMSS (Trends in Math and Science Survey) test is administered here in English, making us one of the very few countries that take the test in a language that is not generally spoken at home. We do poorly in TIMSS. (The Japanese take TIMSS in Japanese; the Finns in Finnish.) But would taking the test in Filipino make for better scores?

The Department of Science and Technology did conduct such a test in Filipino and the results were equally dismal. Therefore, it's not so much language; it is simply that children aren't learning Science and Math well enough to solve problems.

On the other hand, "Sine'skwela," the Science program on television, is broadcast in Filipino.

Dr. Milagros Ibe, then head of the National Institute of Science and Math Education (Nismed) at the University of the Philippines wrote: "Testing in English does not significantly disadvantage pupils who are taught in 'Sine'skwela' using Filipino as a medium. Understanding of the concepts in Filipino appears to facilitate transfer of learning to English."

These children however are not fluent in English. In fact, "[they] find it hard to communicate and express themselves in English during recitations and discussions."

But clearly, these children learn Science and Math: "Pupils in Grades 2 and 3 who watch 'Sine'skwela' attain master-level in 50-67 percent of the concepts learned, while those not exposed to the program master only 20-33 percent of the same .... Pupils in the lower grades are capable of responding to 4-option multiple choice questions .... Longer tests (i.e., more than 30 items) can also be used for them."

In East Asia, the national or local language is used as the medium of learning for young children. English is taught as a subject—not as the medium of learning—and proficiency is seen as a key to connecting to the world, not as the key to learning.

We, however, seem to want to shortcut learning. We want to connect to the world to be competitive before we learn the fundamentals.

The current DepEd policy on the medium of learning set by former Education Secretary Andrew Gonzalez is sound. Brother Andrew was after all a linguist.

The policy says that the child's mother tongue shall be the medium of learning in Grades 1 to 3 because the 3 R's and fundamental Math and Science concepts are introduced at these grade levels. Makabayan (Social Studies) shall be taught in the mother tongue as well.

English and Filipino are to be taught as subjects.

If Mandarin someday became the global language for business, would you—an English speaker—learn your Science and Math concepts if it were taught to you in Mandarin? Probably not. The same would hold true for the young learner anywhere in this archipelago who does not speak English—or Mandarin—at home.

For Grades 4 to 6, there is a progressive shift to English as the medium of learning for English, Science and Math subjects. By this time, the concepts have taken root, and problem-solving and application are the learning objectives. Filipino will still be used to teach Filipino and Makabayan subjects.

For high school, the mid-grade policy on language is expanded.

The Gullas Bill is now in Congress, having been passed at the House of Representatives. Ironically, it does not deviate from the current DepEd policy. It is a dangerous bill, however, because it places a misleading emphasis on English **as the medium of learning**. As such, the young learners and their teachers will concentrate on the language, not on Science and Math and literacy (that is more fundamental to learning).

The key to better English is better implementation; more teacher training in grammar, composition, vocabulary; more mechanisms to expand English usage in schools such as campus journalism, campus radio, assigned days for English and Filipino communication and the like, more bilingual reading books and elocution contests and spelling bees (both in English and Filipino).

English is essential for communication, but Science and Math are crucial for competitiveness.

We need to be more creative and committed to better English teaching, but not at the expense of Science and Math. Legislation is not necessarily creative. The Gullas Bill in fact ignores world experience on learning by prescribing a solution that misses the problem completely: Why are Philippine schoolchildren not learning?

Juan Miguel Luz is president of the International Institute of Rural Reconstruction and a former education undersecretary.

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An uncommon doctor

I WOULD LIKE TO COMMEND THIS very young doctor, whose article appeared in the "Youngblood" corner last Jan. 13, 2007.

Dr. Che Zablan reminds me of Sen. Juan Flavier, whose accounts as a barrio doctor I read some years back in his book "Doctor to the Barrios." He was also a young doctor then who trekked to the remotest barrios of Cavite to heal people and help them live better lives.

Dr. Zablan's zeal to serve in the barrios is very commendable and admirable. It is not easy to uproot oneself from the comforts of city life, then to move to an unfamiliar place. I hope his story will spur other medical practitioners to take on such a worthy cause. Serving those who cannot compensate or pay back is very fulfilling and, of course, very Christian-like. I'm happy to know that there are still medical practitioners who have not joined the exodus of Filipinos to foreign lands and, instead, have chosen to serve the less fortunate of our society.

Dr. Zablan is a man for others. May his tribe increase!

—CEL BOBILES,
Don Bosco College,
Canlubang, Calamba City

Columbio is not within 6ID AOR

JEOFFREY MAITEM AND ELDIE Aguirre of Inquirer Mindanao referred to Lt. Col. Julieto Ando of the 6th Infantry Division (6ID) as the source of their news story titled "Bodies of rebs found; Army says comrades shot them dead." (PDI, 12/28/06)

Apparently, Maitem and Aguirre still believe that the town of Columbio in Sultan Kudarat province is still within the 6ID's area of responsibility (AOR). The town is now within the AOR of the Army's 10th Infantry Division (10ID). Even as the 6ID's spokesperson and civil military officer, I cannot issue a press statement or talk for and on behalf of the 10ID, PA.

—JULIETO D. ANDO,
lieutenant colonel (INF GSC) PA,
assistant chief of staff for CMO, G7
6th Infantry (Kampilan)
Division, PA, Camp Siongco, Awang,
Datu Odin Sinsuat, Maguindanao

The story was based on a phone interview with Lt. Col. Julieto Ando of the 6ID. For several years, the 6ID has been our source of stories happening in Central Mindanao.

—JEOFFREY MAITEM,
correspondent,
Inquirer Mindanao Bureau

Lussenhop contradicts himself

US EMBASSY SPOKESMAN MATTHEW Lussenhop denied that US Special Forces in the South are engaged in combat. (PDI, 1/16/07) The denial is understandable and perplexing at the same time.

It is understandable because he could not have said otherwise. To admit that US troops are engaged in warfare within Philippine territory would be to admit that the US troops are violating the Philippine Constitution. This in turn may lead to an end to the deployment of US troops in the South, something the US Embassy does not want.

The statement is also perplexing because it is contradictory. Lussenhop said, "Visiting US troops in the Philippines advise, assist, share information with their Philippine counterparts, but they do not engage in combat and they have no direct role in combat operations. Any combat operations are 100-percent Filipino."

Filipino troops are engaged in combat. If visiting US troops are "assist(ing) them, then they are also engaged in combat.

Lussenhop's claim that US troops have no role in combat operations flies in the face of multiple eyewitness testimony claiming that US troops were seen accompanying Filipino troops in actual operations, defusing landmines, evacuating casualties, operating equipment and flying spy planes. It is their word against Lussenhop's.

The claim also contradicts journalists' reports on US troops actually joining Filipino troops on patrol and engaging alleged Abu Sayyaf members in firefights. It is their word against Lussenhop's.

Most interestingly, the claim directly contradicts the statements of the very US troops who have participated in the operations. Writing in US military publications, these troops have narrated how they participated in the "ongoing unconventional warfare operations" in the Philippines.

The current commander of the Special Forces in the South himself, Col. David Maxwell, is on record as saying that their mission is "to conduct unconventional warfare in the Southern Philippines through, by and with the AFP [Armed Forces of the Philippines] to help the Philippine government separate the population and destroy the terrorist organization." He is also on record as saying that, contrary to the Supreme Court ruling, US troops are not banned from engaging in combat.

The United States' own documents state that "unconventional warfare" refers to all those operations that SOFs conduct "through, with, or by indigenous or surrogate forces who are organized, trained, equipped, supported and directed in varying degrees by an external source." This covers "guerrilla warfare, subversion, sabotage, intelligence activities and unconventional assisted recovery."

It is the word of the US troops against the word of the US Embassy spokesperson.

—HERBERT DOCENA,
researcher, Focus on the Global South,
19 Maginhawa St., UP Village, QC

Why pay for health care services

THIS IS IN REACTION TO IVY ROSE de Leon's letter regarding the Philippine General Hospital's decision to increase its service fees. (PDI, 1/18/07)

De Leon is wrong to think that health care delivery should be provided by government for free. We all know, of course, it costs money to provide health care services and, therefore, someone's got to pay for them.

But we also know that the resources of government are perennially scarce; and if we are to provide the minimum, decent level of health care for society's underprivileged, then all of us—government, the business sector, private individuals and yes, even the underprivileged themselves— have to pitch in to finance health care delivery.

It is a mistake to think that the poor will not want to contribute to effective and efficient health care delivery. De Leon need only ask the majority of municipal and city health officers in Metro Manila, many of whom charge their indigent patients bare-minimum service fees for the use of city health clinics and facilities. Charging service fees empowers the poor patient: it makes him feel less of a mendicant and more of a responsible, contributing citizen.

—JOSE MIGUEL B. CURAMENG, MD,
The Zuellig Foundation,
18/F Trafalgar Plaza,
105 HV dela Costa St.,
Salcedo Village, Makati City 1227

Lagman refutes priest's claims

A MAN OF THE CLOTH IS NOT ALways the fountainhead of truth. Neal Cruz should have first validated the claims of Msgr. Ramon Tronqued before publishing them in his Jan. 12 and 15 columns.

Tronqued said that, on Dec. 4, he stopped my daughter's relief distribution at the Tabaco City Parish Pastoral Center because it "was done with malice and deceit"—the goods claimed to be from the DSWD "had the name of Lagman's daughter stamped on each plastic pack."

Several persons can testify that this claim is not true. City Social Welfare and Development Officer Carmenchita Dellova has attested under oath that neither my daughter nor I have requested, received or accessed relief goods from the Tabaco CSWD office in connection with Typhoon Reming or with past calamities. The DSWD regional office has certified that, as of Dec. 4, no relief goods have been allocated to or received by my office for Reming victims. (We have receipts to show that the goods we distributed were bought with my daughter's personal funds; and they were given out in pails, not in plastic packs.) The Lagman relief workers never claimed they were DSWD employees; they had no reason to say so, (the priests knew the DSWD workers). In fact, the first thing they told Tronqued was that they were representatives of former Rep. Krisel Lagman-Luistro.

Tronqued further claimed that on Dec. 4 he sought aid from the city mayor for the evacuees. Mayor Alex Burce, in an affidavit, narrated that: (a) Tronqued talked to him at the City Hall on Dec. 4 but only to tell him the priest was looking for Vice Mayor Oscar Rocha; (b) that on Dec. 6, Tronqued sought his help to relocate the evacuees because the "Pastoral Center was to be used on Dec. 8, 2006 for the thanksgiving reception of a newly ordained priest"; (c) that the evacuees had to go because the pastoral center had become "unsightly and unsanitary." Indeed, Tronqued met with the mayor, not to ask help for the evacuees, but to have them relocated to give way to a church party.

Although no alternate relocation site was found, Tronqued forced the evacuees to leave on Dec. 7. In their joint affidavit, the evacuees said Tronqued told them in Bicolano, "You better start building makeshift houses. We've already accommodated you and now we need the place." They also said that Tronqued angrily told them to leave should they accept the goods from my daughter, which they did at my district office.

I did not claim I was in two places at the same time. What I said was that I was in my district to help my distressed constituents in the mornings and attended sessions in the afternoons to advocate charter reform. Modern air transportation allows me to do this. I have the flight booking certificates to support this claim. I regret having promoted Tronqued although it was Cruz who first called him "bishop."

—REP. EDCEL C. LAGMAN,
first district of Albay

Nicole's mistake didn't make her any less a victim

I READ A LETTER TO THE EDITOR accusing the INQUIRER of bias against convicted rapist Daniel Smith of the US Marines. (PDI, 1/11/07) Maybe a little rephrasing here and there would make the paper sound impartial. But I agree with the editor's comment that guilt is not determined by public opinion, at least not in this country.

Furthermore, does the fact that Nicole rode with the Marines in the van make her any less a victim? Maybe she made a mistake that night by going with the Marines; and, maybe she was too trusting. Maybe she was promiscuous but that doesn't mean that she can't be raped, right? Rape is committed when a person uses force, threat or intimidation to be able to have sexual relations with another. There is no legal requirement that the woman must have an impeccable reputation in order to "qualify" as a rape victim.

In the eyes of the law, Smith is guilty. If his lawyers have any basis for an appeal and the court finds the appeal meritorious, good for him. It is hoped though that the issue on his custody will be resolved and that government officials will for a moment forget about their personal interests.

—KRISTINE M. ESPIRITU,
nicmespiritu@yahoo.co.uk

Arroyo administration is not unlike Burma's junta

A HYPOCRITE OF THE HIGHEST order. This is Gloria Macapagal-Arroyo, the lavish host of last week's Asean Summit, who had the gall to call on the Burmese military leaders to free opposition leader Aung San Suu Kyi.

In fact, the Arroyo administration is identical to the Burmese junta in terms of gross violations of human rights, including the continuing detention of veteran labor leader and Anakpawis Rep. Crispin Beltran and the thousands of cases of warrantless arrests, torture, enforced disappearances and brutal killings.

Clearly, Ms Arroyo has no moral ascendancy to appeal for democracy in Burma as she ranks in the top of Asian puppet presidents who have consistently supported the US war on terror, which has victimized innocent civilians, especially the vocal critics of government corruption and human rights violations.

State-sponsored terrorism is the worst form of terrorism and this is now being legalized through US-tailored anti-terror laws.

Those of us who have seen the recent TV footage of Manila policemen violently dispersing the students rallying at the US Embassy saw the face of police brutality. Those of us who have watched special police forces, in full battle gear, forcing their way into the Iloilo provincial capitol saw another face of police brutality that will be unleashed to harass members of the opposition during the 2007 elections.

We church people thus join all freedom-loving citizens in denouncing the Arroyo administration's schemes for escalating political repression, such as the anti-terror bills, which are designed to benefit power-hungry leaders like Ms Arroyo and her Burmese counterparts.

We reject the anti-terror pact and all undemocratic schemes that the government can use to "legalize" the brutality of police and military forces and to virtually impose the kind of rule that the Marcos dictatorship imposed on the Filipino people and that the military junta in Burma is using to terrorize the Burmese people.

—AMIE DURAL,
secretary general,
Promotion of Church People's
Response (PCPR), 879 Edsa, QC

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5 govs want Iloilo attackers to resign

By Nestor P. Burgos Jr. and Felipe Celino
Inquirer Visayas

ILOILO CITY—FIVE GOVERNORS AND A CITY mayor in Western Visayas allied to President Macapagal-Arroyo have demanded the resignation of policemen and officials involved in last Wednesday's armed assault of the Iloilo provincial capitol.

"We call on those behind the barbaric assault to resign," Antique Gov. Salvacion Zaldivar-Perez said in a telephone interview.

Perez, chair of the Regional Development Council, said she shared this stand with governors Joseph Maranon (Negros Occidental), JC Rahman Nava (Guimaras), Carlito Marquez (Aklan), Vicente Bermejo (Capiz) and Roxas City Mayor Antonio del Rosario.

The Western Visayas officials issued the call because the assault "brought shame to the President and a black eye for the country in the international community," Perez said.

"The attack brought turmoil in Western Visayas and to the peace-loving people of the region. This has never happened here before," she added.

The Commission on Human Rights and other officials have condemned the police assault, launched after Iloilo Gov. Niel Tupas Sr. refused to abide by the order of the Ombudsman dismissing him and two provincial board members from office for graft acts, for excessive use of force against unarmed civilians.

About 200 anti-riot policemen and heavily armed members of the Regional Mobile Group stormed the capitol, destroying glass doors and iron gates to get in. Several supporters of Tupas, employees and journalists were hurt in the process.

The CHR and the police were conducting separate investigations of the incident but Western Visayas police director Chief Supt. Wilfredo Dulay had earlier admitted that some members of the assault force had committed excesses in the operation.

Perez said they were concerned over the impact of the assault on the region's image and tourism industry coming just days before the Ati-Atihan festival in the capital town of Kalibo and a week before the Dinagyang Festival in Iloilo City.

"This might create a negative impact on our tourism programs which is a priority of the President," said Perez.

She said the policemen and officers involved in the operation would no longer be welcome in Western Visayas and will be considered *persona non grata*.

Police officials who commanded the assault force will not be appointed to posts in the region, according to Perez. "They have no more business being in Region VI."

Justice Secretary Raul Gonzalez on Saturday defended the policemen saying they were merely implementing lawful orders after they received reports that Tupas had armed supporters inside the capitol.

Gonzalez had said it was unfair to blame the policemen when they were just responding to the putting up of barricades and locking of doors in the capitol.

But Perez said the controversial operation has created a backlash against the President "who had nothing to do" with the dismissal of Tupas and the armed assault on the capitol.

Perez said the President had agreed to the request of Bohol Gov. Erico Aumentado, president of the League of Provinces of the Philippines and Union of Local Authorities of the Philippines, to give Tupas 72 hours starting last Wednesday to give up his post.

Perez added that she and Aumentado had offered to go to the Iloilo provincial capitol and ask Tupas to step down if the deadline lapsed without a court order stopping his dismissal.

But Perez said the Department of Interior and Local Government and police officials did not listen to Aumentado who had instructions from the President to convey her decision to give Tupas 72 hours to leave his post.

"They defied the President's orders and now she is being blamed for the actions of some of her people," said Perez. She refused to name the officials, but she added that the public already knows them.

Perez said the President was busy in the Association of Southeast Asian Nations (Asean) meetings in Cebu when the Ombudsman and DILG issued the dismissal order against local officials.

In Roxas City, the Capiz provincial board passed Friday a resolution denouncing the brutal force used by the Regional Mobile Group (RMG) during the attempt to physically remove Tupas from the Iloilo provincial capitol.

Capiz Board Member Enrique Martin said what the RMG forces did was simple lack of respect and "overkill" destroying government properties.

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Thousands bury Capiz town vice mayor, 2 others

TAPAZ, CAPIZ—THE RELATIVES of slain Tapaz Vice Mayor Victor Gardoce and two others continue to seek justice even as thousands of mourners braved the heat of the midday sun to attend the simultaneous burial of the three victims.

The symphatizers, relatives and friends of Gardoce, Carida Village chief Leonardo Gimeno and the vice mayor's driver Anthony Gequillo stayed until 1:20 p.m. at the Tapaz public cemetery, unmindful of their empty stomach to bring their loved one to their final resting place.

The three were gunned down in Dec. 30, 2006 at the Taft barangay hall.

Their remains were brought first to Tapaz Civic Center 6:30 a.m. for a necrological service before these were brought to Tapaz Catholic Church.

Several placards and posters, seeking justice for the killings and denouncing political dynasties, were seen at the civic center and main streets in the Tapaz poblacion.

The victims' relatives urged witnesses to the killing and those who have information to help identify the killers and masterminds.

Rosemarie Gardoce, the vice mayor's wife, also apologized to the families of Gimeno and Gequillo.

Gardoce's wife noted that the two would have been alive if not for her husband's invitation. She said she believed that her husband was the lone target of the assailants.

Gardoce's supporters and friends have called on Rosemarie to run for mayor in the May election. Gardoce had been planning to run for the city's top post.

However, Rosemarie, who is the chief of the Municipal Planning and Development Office (MPDO), said she would consult her family first before making any decision.

Earlier, the police prevented Mayor Romualdo Exmundo Jr. and cousin Provincial Board Member Ronald Exmundo from visiting the victims' wake and interment to avoid any untoward incident.

The police have filed multiple murder charges against the board member's personal driver, Noel Fuentespina, and four unidentified persons, before the Capiz provincial prosecutor's office.

The 605th Mobile Group took over the duties of Tapaz police after Chief Supt. Wildredo Dulay, regional police office director, relieved on Jan. 11 the town police force to ease the tension brought about by the murder. *Felipe Celino, Inquirer Visayas*

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Army official scores Left's claim on killings

By Joey A. Gabieta
Inquirer Visayas

TACLOBAN CITY—A TOP MILITARY official in Eastern Visayas cried foul over the claims of militant groups that the killing of a Bayan Muna member in Northern Samar signaled the start of killing people who are involved in progressive or militant groups.

Col. Francis Lanuza, commanding officer of the 801st Infantry Brigade, which covers Eastern Samar and some parts of western Samar, labeled the claim as unfair and without any basis at all.

"We at the Armed Forces of the Philippines abhor any form of killings. We, at all times, observe and respect human rights. Under my brigade, I don't tolerate that. Anybody who commits any human rights violations will be investigated and punished accordingly," he said.

He said he issued an order to all his four battalion commanders to make sure there will not be any human rights violations in their anti-insurgency campaign.

The 801st Brigade, which is based in Camp Daza, Hinabangan town in Samar, is composed of the 14th IB, 62nd IB, 46th IB and 52nd IB.

University professor

Unidentified assailants shot to death Jose Maria Cui, founding member of Bayan Muna and provincial coordinator of Katungod-Sinirangan Bisayas, while he was in front of his class at the University of Eastern Philippines in Northern Samar Friday afternoon.

The 53-year-old Cui, who was teaching social sciences at the time, was hit in his chest and head. Police authorities have yet to identify the suspects.

Several militant and human rights groups in the region have condemned Cui's killing.

Katrina Castillo, acting secretary general of Katungod-Sinirangan Bisayas, said the killing was part of the military's Oplan Bantay Laya, which aims to "neutralize" those in the progressive and militant groups.

Lanuza noted that the military always get the blame whenever a member of militant groups gets killed.

He also challenged the militant and progressive groups to comment on the recent killing of a military asset in Catbalogan, Samar, allegedly gunned down by a Sparrow Unit of the New People's Army.

The military official was referring to the shooting of Augusto Daclitan, 53, in front of the provincial capitol last Wednesday night.

Daclitan was a former NPA member but he surrendered to the government during the administration of controversial Army Major General Jovito Palparan, who was then the commanding general of the 8th Infantry Division.

Daclitan was the provincial coordinator of the Alliance of Nationalism and Democracy, an anti-communism group.

Security guard

Another military asset was also gunned down in Catbalogan, Samar on Friday morning by two men riding in motorcycle, according to Lt. Jose Marie Chico, chief public affairs office of the Army's 8th IB.

Killed was Alfonso Sabillo, 48, at 7:45 in the morning while he was about to enter the Development Bank of the Philippines (DBP)-Catbalogan Branch in San Bartolome Street.

The victim, who worked as a security guard of the DBP, was hit in the head.

Witnesses brought him to the provincial hospital but the attending physicians declared him dead on arrival.

In Albay, a former radio broadcaster, who was a former NPA member, was shot dead by suspected rebels at his residence in Barangay Maroroy, Daraga town.

Jose Loreno, 56, food vendor, was shot dead at around 7 p.m. Thursday while tending his store in Barangay Maroroy, said Albay deputy provincial director Arnold Albis.

Broadcaster

Daraga police chief Supt. Jose Capinpin said two gunmen approached the victim and fired at him at close range while a third gunman served as a lookout.

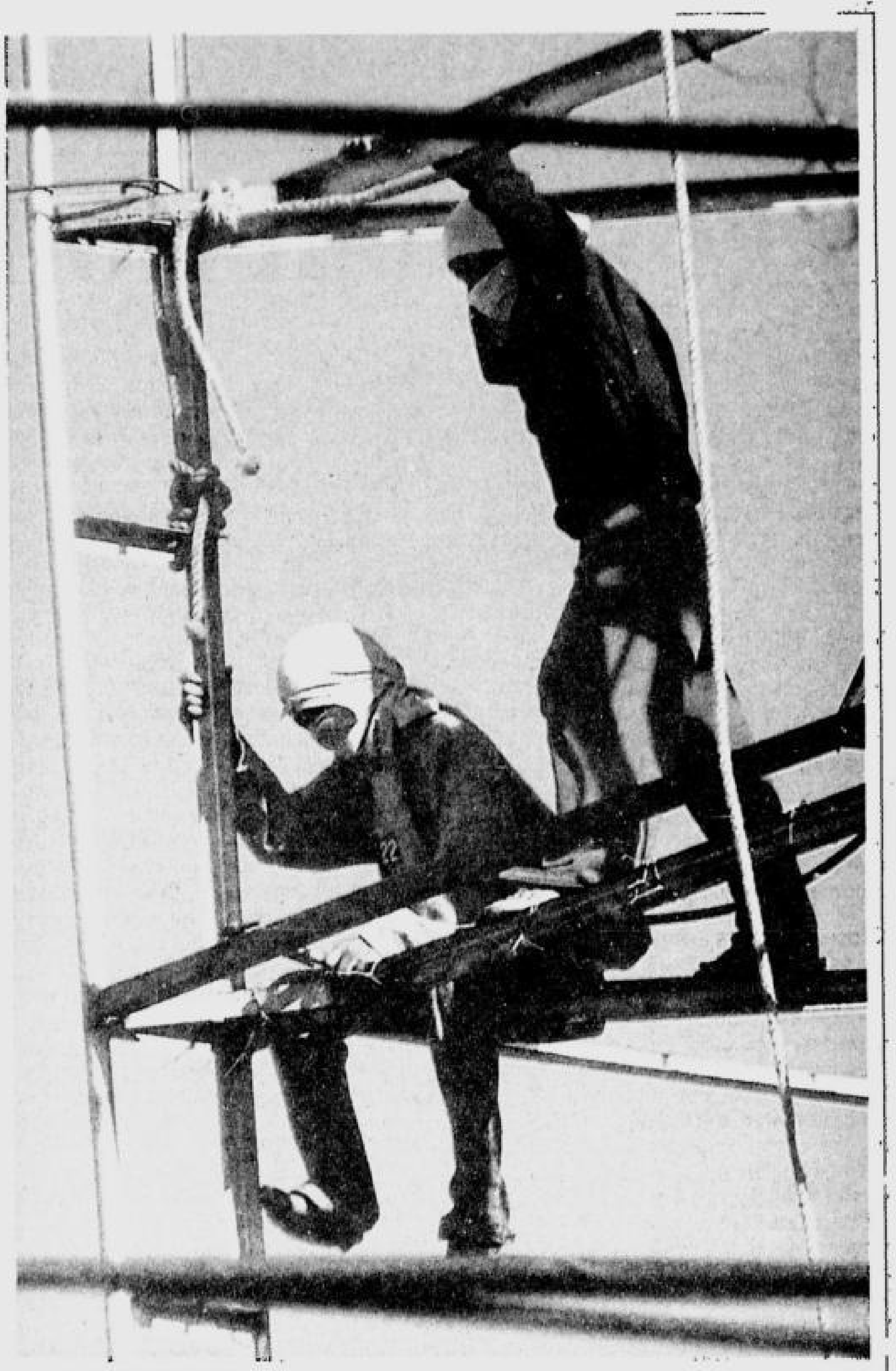
Loreno suffered two bullet wounds in the head and died instantly, said Capinpin.

Capinpin said Loreno's killing was not related to his media work and alleged he was liquidated by his former comrades for his participation in the activities of the Kilusang Kontra-Komunista (anticommunist movement).

Greg Reverente, anchorman of radio program "Birador" aired over dwZR in Legaspi City where the victim was connected, said Loreno had stopped reporting in his program for over six months now and concentrated on his "lechon" business.

Glenn Barcelon, president of the Kilusan ng mga Brodkaster ng Pilipinas-Albay chapter, said they were leaving it to police investigators to determine if Loreno's killing was related to his being a former mediaman.

Some former colleagues in the local media said the victim had been very vocal in his criticisms of the rebel organizations which could have caused his death. *With a report from Bobby Labalan and Ephraim Aguilar, Inquirer Southern Luzon*



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Workers without the support of safety gadgets, cut the angle bars of a billboard structure in Mandurriao District in Iloilo.

Militants hold Edsa II commemoration protest

CALAMBA CITY—ABOUT 500 MEMBERS of various political organizations from Cavite, Laguna, Batangas and Quezon converged in Calamba City at 4 p.m. Saturday to call for the "ouster of the traitor of Edsa II."

The peasant group Pagkakaisa ng mga Magsasaka sa Laguna (Pumalag), the provincial chapter of Kilusang Magbubukid ng Pilipinas, also held a demonstration in Sta. Cruz, Laguna on Saturday morning, with streamers and placards bearing the call to oust President Macapagal-Arroyo.

"We will not let a heartless and ruthless ruler remain in the seat of power," said Arman Albarillo, secretary general of Bagong Alyansang Makabayan-Southern Tagalog (Bayan-ST) during a rally here.

Not worth the trust

Albarillo said that during President Arroyo's short stay in power, she had proven that she was not worth the trust of the people.

"The election is at hand, and we will not allow (Ms Arroyo) to continue in power," he said.

He said the President traded the country's sovereignty and patrimony by allowing the US to have custody over convicted Lance Cpl. Daniel Smith.

The youth party-list Kabataan Party also expressed dismay over Ms Arroyo's leadership, saying "the President betrayed the youth because of unprecedented education crisis under her administration despite promises of heeding the youth agenda, which included a higher education budget and decent employment."

Ouster

PJ Santos, Kabataan-ST coordinator, recounted that thousands of students from the University of the Philippines at Los Baños and other schools in the region took part in the few days that eventually led to the ouster of former President Joseph Estrada.

"Now, six years after, the state of the youth has become worse. Ironically, it is these students that suffered hard blows from the Arroyo administration with the 300-percent tuition increase in UP and the increased number of tuition hikes in various universities and colleges. *Niña Catherine Calleja, Inquirer Southern Luzon*

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Prayers doomed Janjalani

From page A1

sance platoon led by 2nd Lt. Romulo Dimayuga chanced upon a small group of armed men resting in hammocks in the forests of Upper Tanum in Indanan, they had no idea that among that group was the country's most wanted Abu Sayyaf leader.

Dimayuga said he could not forget the distinct, plaintive voice rising from the midst of the group. The man sounded like he was singing and praying while everyone else was asleep, or just resting and listening to him.

The lieutenant, fresh from the Philippine Military Academy and out on his first field assignment, could not tell for sure if the hymn he was hearing in those wee hours of morning was in Arabic or Tausug.

"I can't understand Arabic and Tausug. All I was thinking at the time was that, maybe, he was the one in charge because it was early morning, almost 5 o'clock, and he could afford to make noise," Dimayuga recounted in an interview with the INQUIRER the other day.

"It struck me that whoever he was, he must have been somebody who could afford to make such a noise without being reprimanded or stopped."

Close quarters combat

Using his night-vision goggles, Dimayuga said he could see that some of the men had awakened and had started to prepare breakfast.

He had no idea what Janjalani looked like and the man who was singing had his head bowed, as though he was reading lyrics from a small book.

Only five meters separated Dimayuga's men and the armed group.

"We could have waved at each other," Dimayuga recalled. "A few movements and our bodies would have bumped. That was how close we were, so we had to make a quick decision."

Attack begins

Being the platoon leader, Dimayuga said his instinct told him he should waste no time. Quietly, he signaled his men to start throwing grenades in the direction of the voice, at the men in the hammocks.

The grenade blasts were followed by volumes of fire from Dimayuga's troops. Roused from their sleep, the surprised group answered with their own fire.

Sense of panic

"There was heavy firing from them. They were used to close quarters combat. Immediately, there were wounded on our side," Dimayuga said.

Six of Dimayuga's men, all on their first field assignments like him, died in the exchange.

Then they heard the distinct voice again, this time issuing commands in a language that Dimayuga and his men could not understand, and assumed it was either Tausug or Arabic.

The cries that came from the voice seemed to create panic among the armed group.

Bullet silences the voice

Then the man stood up.

In seconds, a bullet struck him in the neck and he fell instantly.

As snipers, Dimayuga's men had been trained to aim at specific targets. Who exactly fired the shot that cut down Janjalani, Dimayuga could not tell for sure.

"I can't really tell whose bullet hit him fatally since it was still dark when we started the attack," Dimayuga said.

Reinforcements come

Suddenly, Dimayuga had a sense that he and his men had been surrounded by a bigger group that seemed to have come from nowhere to help their besieged comrades.

Dimayuga was wounded by the firing from the reinforcements.

He said the size of the new group gave him a hint that he and his men must have chanced upon a really important personality.

"The way they retaliated indicated that they had suffered a great loss, but at that moment, we had no idea who it was."

DNA test

Dimayuga was in Ternate, Cavite, undergoing yet another training, when the INQUIRER reached him on Saturday and broke to him the news: The results of a DNA test taken from a body which the Marines had dug up in the jungle showed that the man they took out with a bullet in the neck was the "emir" (commander or chief) of the country's fiercest bandit group—a man linked to Osama bin Laden's al-Qaida network.

He received the news calmly—and with pride. The confirmation of Janjalani's death, he said, brought honor to his platoon.

A worthy cause

"It also meant that the death of my fellow Marines and the wounding of 16 others were for a great cause," he said.

Did he think Janjalani's death would put an end to the Abu Sayyaf threat?

Dimayuga said the Abu Sayyaf might take a while to find a successor to Janjalani, but he was certain someone would eventually take over.

Is he willing to be deployed in Sulu again to go after the remaining Abu Sayyaf members?

"Yes, if I am ordered to go back," he said. "I am a soldier, it's my duty to fight."

'Gateway to Heaven'

Dimayuga was a member of the First Recon Class 12 trained specifically to hunt Janjalani and his band. The platoon was trained by Recon Marine head Maj. Robert Velasco, who was among the first Marine officers that fought the Abu Sayyaf in Basilan in 1993.

When Dimayuga and his men first arrived in Sulu, they had reported to 3rd Marine Brigade Commander Brig. Gen. Juancho Sabban—an intelligence and tactical officer that overran the first camp of the Abu Sayyaf in Upper Kapayawan, Isabela.

That camp was called Al-Madinah. It meant "Gateway to Heaven."

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ARMED Forces Chief of Staff Gen. Hermogenes Esperon crosses out the photo of Khadaffy Janjalani, chief of the Abu Sayyaf, who carried a $5-million price on his head during a news conference at Camp Aguinaldo. REUTERS

WHO WILL REPLACE JANJALANI?

THE DEATH OF THE PHILIPPINES' most-wanted terror suspect leaves his al-Qaida-linked Abu Sayyaf group with no strong successor, security officials said Sunday.

A list of Abu Sayyaf commanders that the military and police say may end up as successor to Khadaffy Janjalani includes:

- RADULAN SAHIRON: A one-armed Moro rebel commander in his 70s based in the forested mountains of Patikul on southern Jolo island. An ex-commander of the Moro National Liberation Front, a rebel group which signed a 1996 peace accord with the government, Sahiron is the Abu Sayyaf's most senior fighter.

However, he lacks Janjalani's extensive local and foreign contacts and has often been hoisted atop a horse in recent years because of his many illnesses, including arthritis and diabetes. Washington has offered a $200,000 reward for his capture.

- ISNILON HAPILON: Another former MNLF commander based in Lantawan on Basilan island. He is believed to have from 20-30 armed men. He was last monitored with Janjalani in Jolo last year.

He gained notoriety by helping Janjalani carry out major attacks, including the kidnapping of three Americans and 17 mostly Filipino tourists from a resort island in 2001. One of the Americans was beheaded and another was killed during an army rescue.

Hapilon, in his 40s or 50s, is a rural-based fighter who has not ventured much beyond the mountains of Basilan and Jolo. He is believed to have crude bomb-making skills but is proficient with guns. Washington has offered a reward of up to $5 million for his capture.

- ABU PULA: A former MNLF rebel based in Jolo's mountainous Indanan with an estimated 50 to 70 armed followers. He is called by some as "Dr. Abu" because of his purported ability to perform crude treatments on wounded guerrillas and ailing villagers.

Pula, believed to be in his 50s, is not known to have extensive local and foreign militant contacts but he reportedly harbored Dulmatin and Patek for several months in his mountain stronghold last year.

The United States has offered a reward of $100,000 for his capture. *AP*

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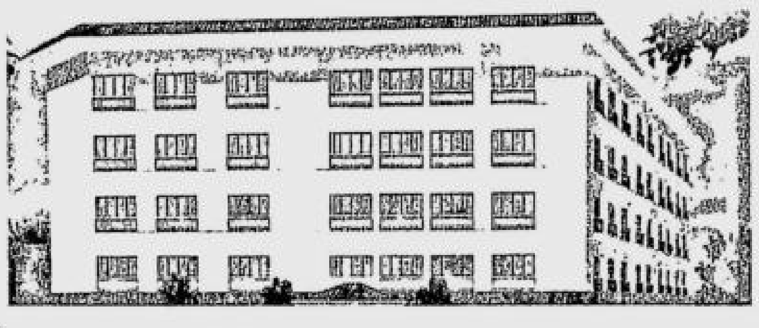

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'Final battle against Abus at hand'

From page A1

"Right now, they are disorganized and on the run," he told reporters.

In Saturday's clash, about 40 soldiers from the 35th Infantry Battalion and 53rd Division reconnaissance company were on board three military trucks on their way to their patrol base when they came under attack in Parang, Sulu, Army spokesperson Maj. Ernesto Torres said.

Torres did not mention casualty figures among the Abu Sayyaf but said six of them were captured in pursuit operations.

Asked if the ambush was part of the retaliatory attacks, Torres said "that can be concluded, with the neutralization of its top leaders."

Samples matched

Bacarro would not go so far as to call the attack a retaliation for Janjalani's death.

"We call it a 'hasty ambush.' *Panggulat lang*," he said.

Bacarro said the bandits fired at the soldiers, then withdrew into the jungle with soldiers in pursuit.

Confirmation that the cadaver unearthed by Marines in Patikul on Dec. 27 was that of Janjalani came from a DNA test conducted by the US Federal Bureau of Investigation.

The test matched samples from the remains with those obtained from Janjalani's brother, Hector, who gave samples of his saliva only after much persuasion.

Hector is serving a life term at the New Bilibid Prisons for the kidnapping of an American tourist.

The samples matched.

Another blow

Janjalani, for whose capture the United States offered a reward of $5 million, was believed to have been mortally wounded in an encounter in Patikul, Sulu, last Sept. 4.

In a further huge blow to the Abu Sayyaf, another of its top leaders, Jainal Antal Sali, alias Abu Sulaiman, was killed in an encounter with soldiers in Talipao, Sulu, on Jan. 17.

Sulaiman, known as the "Engineer" because of his education, is said to have planned the group's most dangerous attacks, including the 2004 SuperFerry bombing near Manila which killed more than 100 people.

The military believes Abu Sayyaf leaders Isnilon Hapilon and Radulan Sahiron are among those in line to replace Janjalani *(See related story on Page A-17)*.

ARMED Forces Chief of Staff Gen. Hermogenes Esperon Jr. at a news conference at Camp Aguinaldo: The end of the Abu Sayyaf is near.

AP

Bacarro said it was "not impossible" for the younger generation of Abu Sayyaf members to take the place of Janjalani and Sulaiman.

A turning point

Under Janjalani's leadership, the Abu Sayyaf turned to terror tactics, specializing in kidnappings for ransom and bombings.

More than 7,000 troops are scouring the dense jungles of Sulu for remnants of the Abu Sayyaf, who are also believed to be protecting Jemaah Islamiyah bomb experts Dulmatin and Umar Patek, wanted for the October 2002 bombings in Bali.

President Macapagal-Arroyo said Janjalani's death "marks the mortal turning point for the Abu Sayyaf."

"All in all, AFP tactical prowess, the fusion of intelligence and training with the United States and our allies in the region and most of all, the vigilant support of the people and communities—have combined to breach the deadly ring of evil, put its cells in disarray and laid them open for the final blow," Ms Arroyo said.

Economy is key

She vowed her administration would "mop up the remnants of terror" as it moved to develop Mindanao's economy.

Still, she said, "we must not let our guard down."

US forces have provided combat training and weapons, including night-vision goggles, to Filipino troops in the battle against the Abu Sayyaf. They have also helped track down militants with high-tech surveillance equipment.

US help

Analysts said Janjalani's death would not destroy the Abu Sayyaf but a sustained ground offensive, backed up with economic development, could eventually wipe them out.

"Abu Sayyaf grows and regroups through hardship, grievances and abuses by government officials," said Scott Harrison, managing director of Manila-based risk consultancy Pacific Strategies and Assessments.

"If they (the Philippine government) can keep up the community action they can possibly turn the corner on this. If they turn their backs on this and move on to other things then the Abu Sayyaf will just regroup."

Experts say the latest success is due to a renewed commitment by Philippine military chiefs to eliminate Abu Sayyaf, and crucially, to US training, tactics and hardware.

Clan ties

Over the longer term, however, the Philippine military will have to maintain its commitment to preventing Jolo and nearby islands reemerging as bases for Southeast Asian militants, analysts say.

Political distraction is another risk.

Other experts say that even if the government succeeds in wiping out the Abu Sayyaf, there may well be other disgruntled militants to pick up the fight.

"It's all about kinship and clan ties. Organization does not matter, it's blood," said Zachary Abuza, an associate professor at Simmons College in Boston.

In addition to the family ties that crisscross rival groups, Jolo also has a deep-rooted warrior culture that makes it difficult to tame.

For now at least, the military pursuit of the Abu Sayyaf and their Indonesian allies has kept them on the move, preventing any new large-scale attacks and hampering recruitment of new members.

"I really think they are being run ragged on Jolo," said Harrison. "The military campaign is really quite impressive." *With reports from Christine O. Avendaño, AP, Reuters*

Family says Janjalani alive

ISABELA CITY—THE FAMILY OF Khadaffy Janjalani believes the Abu Sayyaf leader is still alive.

One of his sisters, who asked not to be identified by her real name, said their 72-year-old father, Abubakar, would not believe the results of the DNA test confirming that the man killed in Sulu was his son.

"Whatever is said, our father does not believe it. For him, Khadaffy is still alive," the sister said in Filipino.

Asked why, she said: "Maybe that is called a father's instinct."

The elder Janjalani refused to face reporters and instead sent his daughter as the family's representative during an interview at the family residence in Barangay Tabuk in Basilan.

The sister questioned the findings, insisting that her brother Hector had refused to give samples for a DNA match with samples taken from the cadaver in Sulu.

"We heard that Hector did not agree to a DNA test. Now, there is a result ... It is confusing," she said.

Hector initially refused to take part in the test but prison sources told the INQUIRER he later agreed, purportedly under duress, to give samples of his saliva. *Inquirer Mindanao*

Janjalani: Prophet gave order to kidnap

From page A1

ture), classroom instruction, and other assemblies.

Such activities earned him the ire of the military. The ulama (religious scholars) were worried until they decided to defuse the threat by sending him to study Arabic and Islamic studies abroad. Fortunately, even the religious sector of the MNLF (Moro National Liberation Front) helped to find a scholarship slot for him in Libya until he became a member of the MNLF, heading its da'wah (Islamic propagation) movement.

OD: You mean, he became a member of the MNLF only when he was already abroad in Libya?

KJ: Yes. The truth is, however, he's one who did not like it that the oppressive government would fool the MNLF time and again, talking here and there, agreeing on so many things just to end in betrayal. This is one big reason why the late ustadz left the MNLF and established his own organization upon return to the Philippines.

OD: So when did he establish the ASG?

KJ: When he returned in mid-1989, he buckled down to work immediately on his da'wah activities and at the same time established al-Harakatul al-Islamiyyah (Islamic Movement) as a vehicle to be used once more for hulah (homeland), bangsa (nation) and agama (religion), i.e. an independent country, national identity and most of all Islam—meaning, an Islamic state for the Bangsamoro (Moro nation).

OD: Why, what about the MNLF? I believe they have the same objectives.

KJ: The late emir (leader—referring to Abdurajak) believed that since the OIC (Organization of the Islamic Conference) interfered with the Moro right to self-determination, independence was lost forever in favor of the so-called autonomy. Proof is, up to now, nothing came out of that autonomy option. Meaning, my elder brother was correct and justified in his stance.

OD: How come al-Harakatul al-Islamiyyah became ASG?

KJ: Abu Sayyaf was the nom de guerre of my late brother. He copied it from Abdul Rasul Sayyaf, an Afghan mujahideen (fighters for jihad) who became famous for his practice of beheading traitors to the Taliban—whether Muslim or Christian. Much later, we were infiltrated by government spies. Then, because our boys beheaded our enemies that deserve beheading, the Marines under General (Guillermo) Ruiz called us ASG—perhaps referring to us as the "group of beheaders."

JANJALANI: Bandit, pirate, terrorist—they are all the same to us.

OD: Why did you not contradict such a misnomer?

KJ: It is not important what we are known as or called, what matters is our intent or objective.

OD: Well, perhaps that's what you think, but the world now knows you as a bunch of "terrorists."

KJ: Bandit, pirate, terrorist—they are all the same for us.

OD: Are you admitting now that ASG is a terrorist organization?

KJ: Not what they mean. We are mujahideen, albeit a bit brutal since we don't distinguish oppressive soldiers from its public or citizenry—they are generally our enemies. And we cannot soften up or become friends even with Arabs (e.g. in the OIC) if they are in league with our enemies.

OD: Why, what's so different with the groups of Jamal Khalifa or Ramzi Yousef (personalities linked to Osama bin Laden and al-Qaida) that you befriended them?

KJ: Jamal Khalifa was a philanthropist who helped Moro and other mujahideen in this world. Our friendship with them is dictated by necessity, convenience and the need to help one another. They needed at that time volunteers for Afghanistan, while we need money to buy arms, ammunition and other necessities to fight the oppressive government. Ramzi Yousef came later through Khalifa. We reciprocated their assistance by providing them volunteers, to include our visit to Afghanistan.

OD: What assistance did they provide you?

KJ: They gave us P6 million, if I'm not mistaken.

OD: That means you bought your firearms here locally? From where and who facilitated?

KJ: Yes. There was no problem buying guns then due to the plentiful supply from either gun smugglers, Recom (Philippine National Police Regional Command) or Southcom (Armed Forces of the Philippines Southern Command), soldiers who badly need cash. The late Asmad and Ed facilitated the purchases.

OD: Who were these Asmad and Ed you mentioned?

KJ: Asmad Abdul was from Tawi-Tawi and a pioneering member. Then Edwin Angeles was your provincemate from Sulu. He joined us after our return from Afghanistan.

OD: Why, where was al-Harakatul al-Islamiyyah (ASG) established? Why were there pioneers from Sulu and Tawi-Tawi?

KJ: Initially, we sat down in Isabela, the three Janjalani brothers (Abdurajak, Hector and Khadaffy) with Wahab Akbar (Basilan governor). Then, after two weeks or so, we again sat down with Asmad, Tuan Awliya and the nephew of Sir Bruno (Juvenal Bruno).

OD: Is the view accurate that the ASG was a creation of the CIA (Central Intelligence Agency) or the AFP?

KJ: To repeat, our organization is al-Harakatul al-Islamiyyah, not ASG. If they refer to their own ASG, that may be true. But if they refer to al-Harakatul al-Islamiyyah, that's a lie.

OD: Is it allowable for mujahideen to kidnap? On what basis?

KJ: Whether philosophically or religiously, it is allowed. There is basis for kidnappings. Philosophically, if it is allowed to kill the enemy, why not allow to just kidnap him? Religiously, no less than the Prophet of Islam who gave the order to kidnap or seize the caravan of Abu Suffian, isn't it? So, what is the difference of kidnapping or seizure then and now?

OD: What you are talking about I suppose is kidnapping the enemy, not civilians or noncombatants?

KJ: The enemy is not to be distinguished as to whether they are armed or not. In fact, many of our casualties were our civilians not mujahideen. Why is it allowed for the oppressive soldiers and prohibited for us?

OD: Is it true that al-Harakatul al-Islamiyyah was created in order to undermine the MNLF?

KJ: As I said before, if you are talking of al-Harakatul al-Islamiyyah, it is not true. As a matter of fact, we even wanted to serve as one of the pillars of the MNLF, thus explaining why so many former MNLF commanders were taken in by al-Harakatul al-Islamiyyah. If there is a slight gap, it is in the means of achieving the purpose—for us, it's independence; for the MNLF, it's autonomy.

OD: Is it true you have links with the al-Qaida of Osama bin Laden or Jemaah Islamiyah?

KJ: We don't even know Bin Laden or any leader of JI, how can we have links? What's true is that we have some JI field operatives with us who go with us anywhere. We actually don't mind who they are provided they are willing to be our helping hands and follow our way of doing things here, we cannot be choosy.

OD: So that confirms that there are many DPAs (deep penetration agents) infiltrating your rank and file?

KJ: In the recent past, yes. But almost all were gone now consequent to their action and deed. They thought live bullets recognize targets. The few who remain are anyway marked.

OD: How is your organization since you assumed leadership up to now?

KJ: I did not actually expect that I will be their emir. But when my brother (Abdurajak) passed away and Ka Hector was in jail, that compelled me to shoulder the burden. Fortunately, nothing changed, we are still steadfast in fulfilling the trust he left us.

OD: Why is there seemingly a decrease in the number of kidnappings since you assumed leadership?

KJ: There are many reasons but it should not be told here since it constitutes a military secret. For now, suffice it to say, we are still ever vigilant in fighting the enemy.

OD: How are your comrades-in-arms in Sulu?

KJ: I think you know how good and strong they are in Sulu. And it is customary for us to break up into several autonomous groupings for as long as it is agreed beforehand.

OD: Is there anything you can add to what was said already?

KJ: I believe it's all said and we are still monitoring the events in Manila. (This was right after the Feb. 24 & 26 "coup attempts," where the military mainly had its attention.)

OD: Thank you so much for your time. What you've clarified would be very helpful.

KJ: Thank you too. We pray it will be put to good use, what we told thus far.

Growing up with Gabe

From page A1

both inside and outside the country. And we planned to do lots of traveling with the kids, for travel is the best teacher.

By the age of 2, Gabe was already speaking in complete sentences. We have a genius on our hands, my wife Chelo and I thought, even more precocious than his sister.

But then we began to notice that Gabe began talking less and less, until by the age of 3 he was down to one-word sentences. He did not like to play, either, with his cousins and other children but preferred being by himself. He would play with the boxes his toys came in instead of the toys. He also would get into the kitchen cabinets and play with the whisks and the cooking spoons.

"He was just marching to a different drummer," I reasoned, which made him even more of a genius—one who thought outside the box.

But deep down, we suspected that something was wrong—something was off.

It was his third pediatrician, Dr. Jack Lamendola, who confirmed it. Lamendola was great with his patients—he talked to them directly, not their parents, about what was ailing them and treated them as equals. His waiting room was always full.

The minute Gabe came bounding in and jumping in his lap, and after a few questions to Gabe, the doctor set Chelo aside and advised her to have Gabe examined by a specialist because, straightforwardly, he told Chelo he suspected Gabe might have autism.

But that was impossible. I'd heard the word before but never really knew what it meant. I thought autistics were people with special skills and talents, advanced, but who were somehow retarded or slow in their development in other things. Little did I know that in many ways I was right.

Since we were living in Sacramento, the capital of California, where the state offices were located, we made an appointment to see the head of child psychological services for the state, Dr. Ron Huff.

As soon as Huff saw Gabe and he would not look back or make eye contact with him, the doctor told us that in all likelihood Gabe had autism.

World crashing down

If you've never felt the world crashing down on you, Chelo and I did that fateful afternoon in 1989. Gabe was 3 years old then and in a few months he would be turning 4.

According to Huff, this was already a late age to diagnose a child with autism, but had we waited even a few months longer, it would have been that much harder. The earlier a child was diagnosed, he said, the easier it was to find or create a program to help him.

So Chelo and I buckled down to work—it was mainly Chelo, though I must admit, who did most of the work—to set up a program to get Gabriel on track and as near normal as possible in the quickest time.

Gabe underwent a diagnostic program to ascertain his particular needs and where he could be placed in a special education class. Huff and a team of specialists taught us all about autism and trained us how to handle Gabe. In turn, we were to train the junior and senior psychology students who were to undergo their practicum working with Gabe under a state-sponsored system.

We read all the books (OK, Chelo also read most of the books and then told me about them later). Through it all, we felt so alone, like we were the only parents in the world who had a son with autism.

Huff and others then introduced us to a support group of parents in similar straits and this was a big help. Together, in large numbers, we could offer each other not only support but tips on where, what and how to get help for our children, as well as for ourselves.

Mainstreaming—best way

From the books we read and from talking to the other parents, we realized that mainstreaming (placing a child with a disability in a normal class setting) was the best way to treat a child with a disorder.

Children learn from their peers, more than from their teachers—about what is cool, how to dress and talk, the latest fads, etc.—and if one placed a disabled child in a special school, then all that child would learn would be the disabilities of his classmates.

Therefore, we insisted that Gabe be placed in a regular class in a regular public school. At first, we encountered resistance, especially from the district school supervisor at Elk Grove, a town south of Sacramento but to whose school district we belonged, living in South Sacramento.

But when the supervisor, who was against placing Gabe in a regular setting in the first place, heard the words: "We're going to sue you" from Chelo—when the supervisor asked us what we intended to do if she did not take Gabe into her district—her whole attitude changed.

"Here, fill out these forms," the supervisor quickly told us.

So Gabe started school at Markofer Elementary in Elk Grove and his dad went along with him each day.

First of all, because he occasionally threw tantrums and exhibited physical aggression toward others and, secondly, at the time, the teachers at the regular school were not really equipped to handle a pupil like Gabe, so one condition for his acceptance into the mainstreaming program, and for Chelo's and my own peace of mind, one of us always went along to school with him, which was usually me.

Going to school

I took night jobs so I could go to school with Gabe in the daytime and Chelo took day jobs in order to be with him at night.

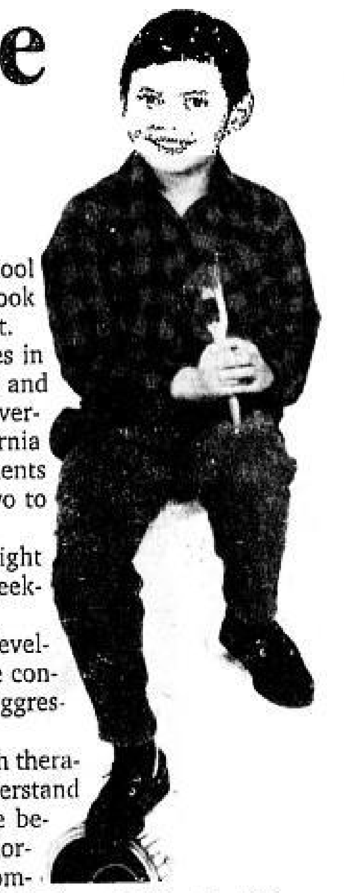
So Gabe would go to regular classes in the morning until the early afternoon and later at home, at about 3 p.m., the University of California at Davis and California State University at Sacramento students would arrive to work with him for two to three hours.

Gabe therefore had a total of about eight hours of training every day, except weekends.

This resulted in huge strides in his development. We got Gabe to establish eye contact with people. His tantrums and aggression were coming under control.

We also took him to a private speech therapist to regain his ability to speak, understand and communicate clearly because we believed the key to his being made near normal as possible lay in his ability to communicate, which for him had become limited.

All this of course cost money, but the state of California took care of most of it, except for the private speech therapy that cost us $95 an hour but was well worth it.



GABE at 7 at John Erhardt Elementary School.

'Music to my ears'

That is why parents of Filipino children with autism are amazed that Gabe can talk a mean streak, so much so that sometimes we have to tell him to "shut up." But deep down I always say to myself, "keep talking Gabe, it's music to my ears."

At Markofer, I went with the class when they went on field trips, usually to the local supermarket, the fire station, the post office, to familiarize the kids with their neighborhood and at the same time teach them how to use the sidewalks and cross the streets properly.

Then Gabe went to John Erhardt Elementary also in Elk Grove. At Erhardt, I organized soccer games during lunch breaks in order to get Gabe to interact with his classmates, and besides soccer was my favorite sport and I also got to play goalie.

In America, Gabe was just one of the students. I would hear his classmates tell others from other classes that he was their classmate Gabe and that he was just different—just like you and me and everyone else is different from everyone else. So it went both ways—Gabe learned from them and they from him.

Chelo and I had always planned to return to the Philippines and not make America our permanent home. We wanted our children to grow up Filipino while at the same time giving them the choice of where to live in the future.

But with Gabe's condition, our plans changed. We decided to remain in America longer and learn and do as much as we could for Gabriel, and return to the Philippines later.

'From Gabe, I learned humility, patience, acceptance, that you can't always get what you want—and not to sweat the small stuff. That family is most important.'

50 years behind

To our dismay, we quickly learned when we came home that the Philippines was at least 50 years behind the times compared to the United States when it came to treating and teaching kids with autism and other disabilities.

While we found through the Autism Society of the Philippines that many parents were serious about doing something for their children, there were also others who chose to keep them at home, away from the eyes of the public, perhaps out of shame, ignorance or guilt, or lack of resources.

In the Philippines, Gabe went to Montessori Filipino Child Research Center and St. Joseph's at Loyola Heights for the higher grades and high school. All these in a regular classroom setting.

But we also hired private tutors in between, like Becky Jackson and Edward Guinto, who went on to teach in New York and the British School at The Fort, respectively.

Gabe also took bowling lessons at SM Megamall and underwent water therapy with Cris de Leon in Parañaque City.

Today, Gabe is in second year college, taking up Library Science at Centro Escolar University. It's the only university in the country that takes in students with disabilities and Library Science is a course that is mainly routine, something that's easy for students with disabilities to learn, work and excel at.

We also retained the services of a private tutor thrice a week—Leila R. Paruli, who is in her final year of graduate school specializing on children with disabilities.

Gabe loves going to school and his classmates naturally gravitate toward him, help him with his schoolwork and are protective of him. This is not only good for Gabe but also helps his classmates overcome any prejudices they may have against children with disabilities.

'He has a good eye'

Gabe has begun taking painting lessons and a brother-in-law who is a name painter in the country told me one day, "He has a good eye."

Gabe learned to swim last summer at the Lozada Swim School and even joined the competition against other swim schools. Although he came in last, over one minute behind the winner, he drew the most cheers from the audience.

Through it all, I went to school with Gabe. Of course, I kept my distance. (What child would want his mom or dad sitting next to him every day in the classroom?) I would stay in the background, in the canteen, the library or run errands in between, but I was always available in case a teacher had a question or a concern or I had a question about Gabe's homework or projects. Or in case he threw a tantrum, which happened less and less as he grew older and mellowed.

From Gabe, I learned humility, patience and understanding. I learned acceptance, that you can't always get what you want—and not to sweat the small stuff. That family is most important.

I learned that all people, no matter who they are, have their own problems and the answers lie within you. I learned to trust in the Supreme Being. Above all I learned unconditional love—the kind Gabe gives me and I him.

He made me grow up

I still tuck him into bed every night. And after we say our prayers together, he says "Good night, dad, I love you."

"Good night, Gabe, I love you, too"

And then I quote from one of the greats, the late John Lennon who wrote in his last album in a song dedicated to his then little boy Sean, "See you in the morning."

"See you in the morning, dad," Gabe answers back.

Gabe has made me grow up. Truly, the child is father to the man.

Greetings to the Muslim World
Happy New Year!
Amun Jadid 1428 H

What is "HALAL" Food?

Halal food means food that is permitted under the Shariah (Islamic) Law. This law is based on the Qur'an, Hadith (tradition of the Prophet Muhammad), Ijma (consensus) and Qiyas (deduction of analogy). The qiyas approved by the relevant Islamic Authority also fulfills the following conditions:

a. Does not contain any components or product of animals that are not Halal.
b. Does not contain any ingredients that are considered najis (filthy).
c. During its preparation, processing or manufacturing, the tools or equipment do used not contaminate the product with things which are considered najis.

Halal certification is a certificate of compliance of the religious requirement observed by all Muslims worldwide. It is now accepted scientifically that a Halal certificate is a guarantee of genuineness, best quality, wholesomeness, cleanliness, and best fit for human consumption of the food product.

The IDCP as a Halal Certification Authority in the Philippines

For the Halal certification of your products, you must select a certifying authority which not only provides credible and authentic certification, but it must also be a certifying authority which is accepted worldwide, especially in the country to which the product is being marketed.

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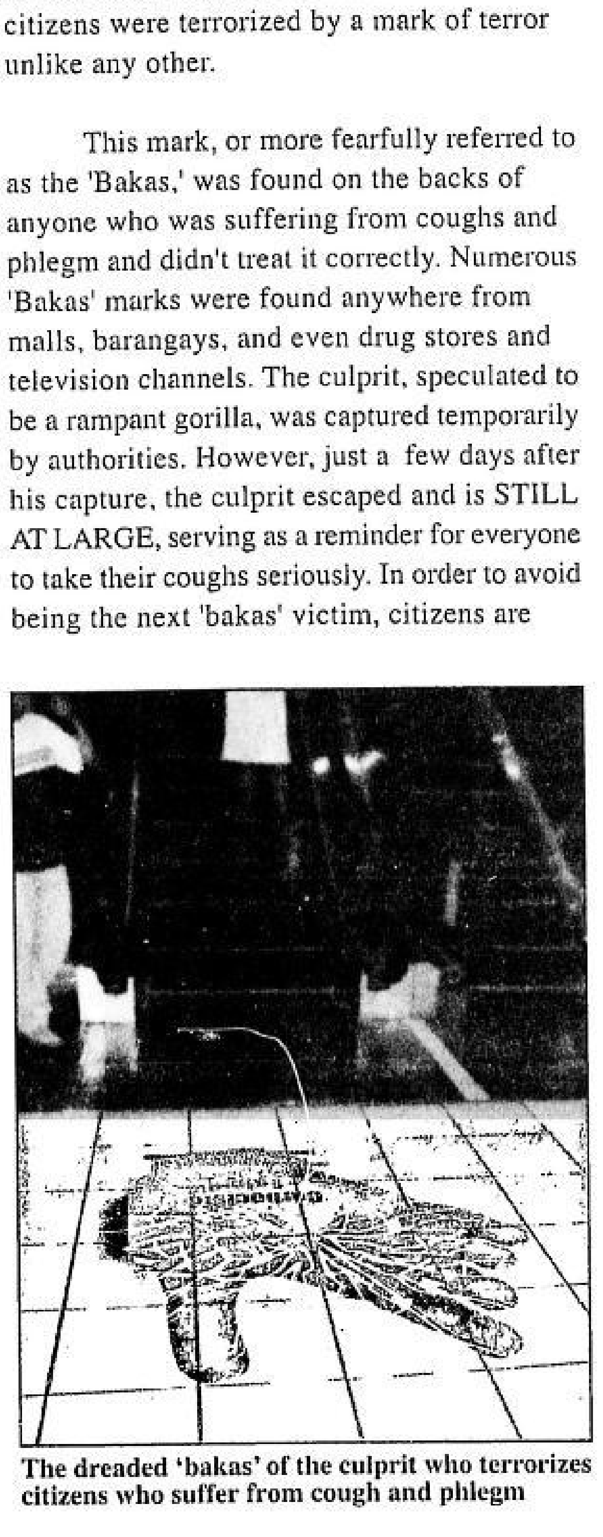
e-mail: artl1030@yahoo.com • idcp@edsamail.com.ph
www.idcp-ph.org

Citizen Finds 'Bakas,' Wins P500,000

After months of searching, the elusive 'bakas' was finally found and the grand reward of P500,000 was given to Mr. Eduardo Taer of Caloocan City. For months Metro Manila citizens were terrorized by a mark of terror unlike any other.

This mark, or more fearfully referred to as the 'Bakas,' was found on the backs of anyone who was suffering from coughs and phlegm and didn't treat it correctly. Numerous 'Bakas' marks were found anywhere from malls, barangays, and even drug stores and television channels. The culprit, speculated to be a rampant gorilla, was captured temporarily by authorities. However, just a few days after his capture, the culprit escaped and is STILL AT LARGE, serving as a reminder for everyone to take their coughs seriously. In order to avoid being the next 'bakas' victim, citizens are advised to take **CARBOCISTEINE SOLMUX®** and take care of their cough and phlegm problems as early as possible.

After the shocking conclusion of the **Carbocisteine Solmux Hanapin ang Bakas Raffle Promo**, and the crowning of the grand prize winner of P500,000, the city is temporarily safe from the 'bakas' culprit. But as a word of caution, at the first signs of phlegm, use Carbocisteine Solmux to avoid being the next 'bakas' victim.



The dreaded 'bakas' of the culprit who terrorizes citizens who suffer from cough and phlegm

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Congress Village, Caloocan City

Winners of P8,000 each and P2,000 for the winning partner

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Clarita B. Emotin
Blk 1, Lot 1 Pamana Ville
Sta. Lucia Novaliches, Quezon City
Winning Drugstore Sales Clerk: Gerafil D. Dela Cruz

Josephine G. Guzarin
107 corner Rosal St., 11th Ave., Caloocan City
Winning Drugstore Sales Clerk: Angel Balinas

Annabelle Dolosa
05 Serafia St., Baluharan, Valenzuela City
Winning Drugstore Sales Clerk: Ma. Christina Nellamas

Zerisa Idalynne O. Cadag
13 Diamond St., Springville Classic
San Nicolas

Lorelet P. Jamolin
1103 Mangga St., Punta, Sta. Ana Manila
Winning Drugstore Sales Clerk: Mark Anthony Rivera

George A. Romero
0139 Blk 22, Addition Hills, Mandaluyong

Amerjaphil S. Fernandez
73 Tolentino St., SFDM, Quezon City
Winning Drugstore Sales Clerk: Alma Bamu

Carbocisteine Solmux®
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SPORTS

Lascuna settles for 14th place tie

KARACHI—TONY LASCUÑA COOLED OFF in the final round and settled for a three-over-par 75 that left him in a nine-way tie for 14th place at the end of the Pakistan Open on Sunday.

After nailing down seven birdies in the third round for a 67, Lascuña couldn't get one in the last 18 holes while taking three bogeys in a 38-37 card that left him with a 7-under total of 281.

The well-built, former caddy from Apo Golf Club in Davao, who had earlier rounds of 70-69, still produced the best finish among the five Filipinos who survived the halfway cut of the opening leg of the 2007 Asian Tour at the Karachi Golf Club.

Gerard Rosales wound up in an eight-way tie for 30th with a 69 for a 4-under 284 total.

Marciano Pucay rallied with a 68 to catch Artemio Murakami (73) at 2-under 286 while Jerome Delariarte finished among the tailenders at 288 after a 72.

Malaysia's Airil Rizman Zahari captured the championship with a final-round 70 for a 19-under 269 total. It was his first win on the Asian Tour.

Rookie Scott Hend of Australia, a former United States Tour regular, salvaged second place with a 69 for 271 while Englishman Simon Hurd took third at 274 after a 72.

Lascuña, who became the fourth Filipino regular on the Asian Tour after Frankie Miñoza, Juvic Pagunsan and Angelo Que when he survived the Asian qualifying series last month in Thailand, picked up $3,703.

Rosales won $2,422, Pucay and Murakami $1,800 each and Delariarte $1,140.

Back-to-back bogeys on the sixth and seventh holes derailed Lascuña's bid for a top 10 finish. He managed to par the next 10 holes only to bogey the 18th.

The Tour resumes with the $2 million Commercialbank Qatar Masters, a co-sanctioned event by the European Tour, at the Doha Golf Club in Qatar.

It will be followed the next week by the $300,000 Philippine Open set Feb. 1-4 at Wack Wack. *Asian Tour News*

Phone Pals, Barako nail semis slots

PUREFOODS veteran Jun Limpot fouls Mac Cardona as the fiery Talk 'N Text guard attacks the basket in last night's game. RYAN LIM

GAMES WEDNESDAY *(Araneta Coliseum)*
4:35 p.m.—San Miguel vs Red Bull
7:20 p.m.—Talk 'N Text vs Barangay Ginebra

By Musong R. Castillo

RED BULL AND TALK 'N TEXT knocked out their foes last night and marched on to separate interesting semifinal series in the Talk 'N Text Philippine Cup.

The Barako and the Phone Pals were unrelenting from the start as they seized their first chance to advance opposite the elimination-round topnotchers.

Talk 'N Text got 23 points from Mac Cardona and 20 from Asi Taulava in a 115-96 victory over Purefoods, while Red Bull erected a 19-point lead at the half and then cruised to a 105-90 decision of Sta. Lucia at the Cuneta Astrodome.

Cardona scored 13 in the final two periods as the Phone Pals ended the reign of the Chunkee Giants while sealing a best-of-seven clash with eliminations topnotcher Barangay Ginebra.

The clincher came easy for the Phone Pals and the Barako, who won for the third straight night after dropping the opener of their separate best-of-five series.

Final Four action starts Wednesday at the Araneta Coliseum, with Yeng Guiao and the Barako seeing action first against the Beermen in the 4:35 p.m. contest.

Talk 'N Text then tries to make it three straight over Ginebra this season at 7:20 p.m.

"Our game plan was to make Purefoods give up," said coach Derrick Pumaren after securing his first semifinal appearance in six years. "But that did not happen in the first half because Purefoods is such a tough team.

Ironically, Pumaren's last Final Four stint came in 2000 while he was coach of Purefoods.

Cardona scored five points in the third period and Anthony Washington had 11 as the Phone Pals broke away with leads of as many as 16 points. Cardona scored eight more in another run for a 104-87 advantage late in the fourth.

Washington went on to finish with 18 markers, while Harvey Carey, Ren-Ren Ritualo and Victor Pablo combined for another 38 points.

Purefoods, which came all the way back from 1-3 down in the semifinals against Alaska before winning this tournament last season, played without Marc Pingris, its Game 1 hero who had a severe left ankle sprain.

Gunslinger Noy Castillo also did not suit up because of a viral infection.

The scores:

First Game

TALK 'N TEXT 115—Cardona 23, Taulava 20, Washington 18, Carey 15, Ritualo 13, Pablo 10, Alapag 6, De Ocampo 6, Fran 3, Noble 1, Belano 0.

PUREFOODS 96—Limpot 21, Yap, J. 18, Artadi 11, Simon 11, Camaso 11, Raymundo 10, Salvador 5, Evangelista 4, Yee 3, Yap, R. 2.

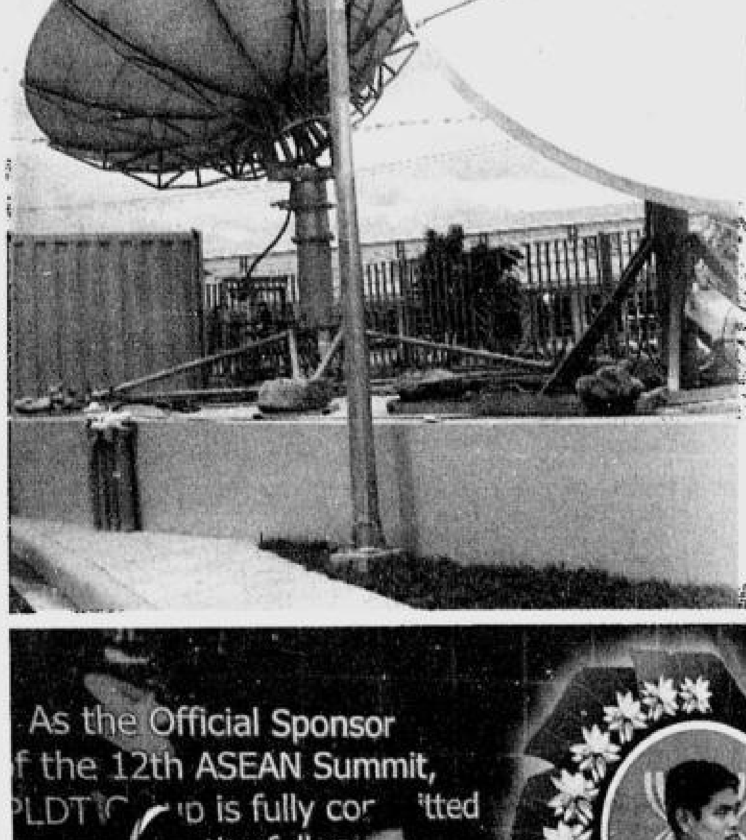
Quarters: 28-22, 57-53, 86-72, 115-96.

Second Game

RED BULL 105—Fonacier 15, Membrere 13, Villanueva 13, Valenzuela 13, Bagulo 11, Najorda 9, Alvarez 8, Bugia 7, Sharma 6, Cruz 5, Pennisi 3, Robinson 2.

STA. LUCIA 90—Gonzales 20, Bughao 17, Omolon 15, Espino 13, Aquino 10, Williams 6, Cabagnot 6, Mendoza 2, Calimag 1, Isip 0, Calli 0.

Quarters: 21-16, 53-34, 78-74, 105-90



Connecting the ASEAN Community

The PLDT Group congratulates the men and women behind the successful 12th ASEAN Summit held in Cebu.

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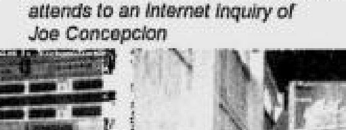
PLDT-SMART booth at the CICC

Ruby Absin of PLDT Cebu Jones Exchange assists a Malaysian media delegate access the Internet using PLDT DSL facilities

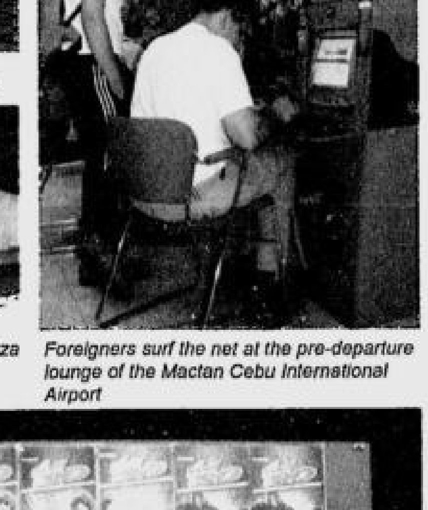
President Gloria Macapagal-Arroyo in a press conference during the Summit

PLDT's Next Generation Network powers the Media Center at the CICC

SMART Customer Care agent guides a delegate in connecting to the Internet within the SMART Hotzone at the Mactan Cebu International Airport

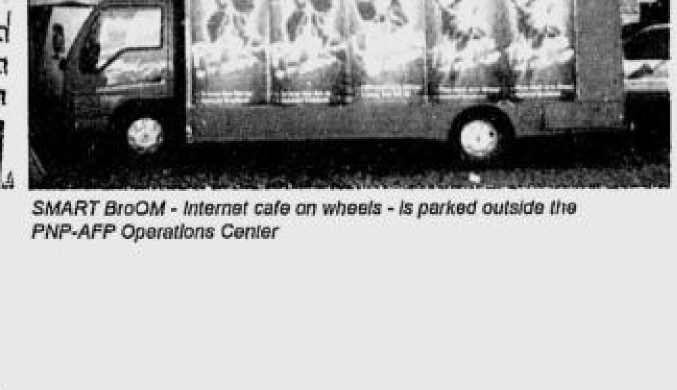


PLDT Corporate Regional Visayas Mindanao Center Head Joseph Versoza attends to an Internet inquiry of Joe Concepcion



Foreigners surf the net at the pre-departure lounge of the Mactan Cebu International Airport

A Mabuhay Satellite engineer checks satellite equipment



SMART BroOM - Internet cafe on wheels - is parked outside the PNP-AFP Operations Center

PLDT fast tracked the deployment of Next Generation Network (NGN) facilities in Cebu in time for the ASEAN Summit. These state of the art high-speed telecommunications facilities provide landline telephones with broadband capabilities – voice, video and high-speed data.

At the Cebu International Convention Center (CICC), delegates and foreign media practitioners had access not only to telephone and Internet facilities, but also to high-quality international broadcast links to Asia, Europe and Australia through the facilities of Mabuhay Satellite.

Delegates and newsmen in SMART Bro Hotzones in the different venues had quick, easy broadband access to the Internet using their laptops. SMART also beefed up its 3G services to ensure always-on broadband connection even while on-the-go.

A SMART Bro on Mobile (SMART BroOM) – a mobile Internet café in a van – was also deployed for the use of the media.

"We are honored to have had the chance to do our share in hosting the 12th ASEAN Summit in Cebu," said PLDT and SMART president and CEO Napoleon L. Nazareno. "The entire PLDT Group joined hands to provide the Summit the required telecommunications support using our full range of products and services."

With the theme "One Caring and Sharing Community," the 12th ASEAN Summit has successfully steered ASEAN closer to realizing its vision of an ASEAN Community by 2020.

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Billboard victim's kin sue ad firm

By Tarra Quismundo

NEARLY FOUR MONTHS AFTER his death, the family of Felipe Gumapon has finally sued the advertising firm that put up the billboard that fell on the victim at the height of Typhoon "Milenyo" last Sept. 28, killing him instantly.

Charges of reckless imprudence resulting in homicide were filed on Friday against executives of the Manila-based JKJ Media Services Inc.

"It is a standard and logical practice for tarpaulins to be rolled down during weather disturbances. The respondents failed to observe this practice," read the complaint filed by the Gumapon family at the Makati City Prosecutor's Office.

Gumapon, a 60-year-old driver working for Primepower Laundry and Dryclean Services, was killed when a billboard fell and crushed the company vehicle he was driving on Edsa's northbound side in Barangay Pinagkaisahan, Makati City on Sept. 28.

The billboard, which was installed on top of a building, toppled over at the height of strong winds brought by Milenyo which slammed directly into Metro Manila.

Aside from wrecking the van Gumapon was driving, the billboard also hit a car and a passenger bus, leaving several persons injured. Officials of the Metropolitan Manila Development Authority who rushed to the scene said the billboard collapsed due to the typhoon's powerful winds.

For the Gumapon family, their loved one's death could have been avoided had JKJ strictly implemented safety precautions while putting up the billboard's steel frame.

"The billboard was not aerodynamic … the metal sheets ended up catching the wind instead of letting it slip through, and the entire display became a big, rigid surface against which the wind blew … Its collapse in the fury of Typhoon 'Milenyo' was inevitable but it could have been averted," read the complaint, signed by Gumapon's son, Garnet.

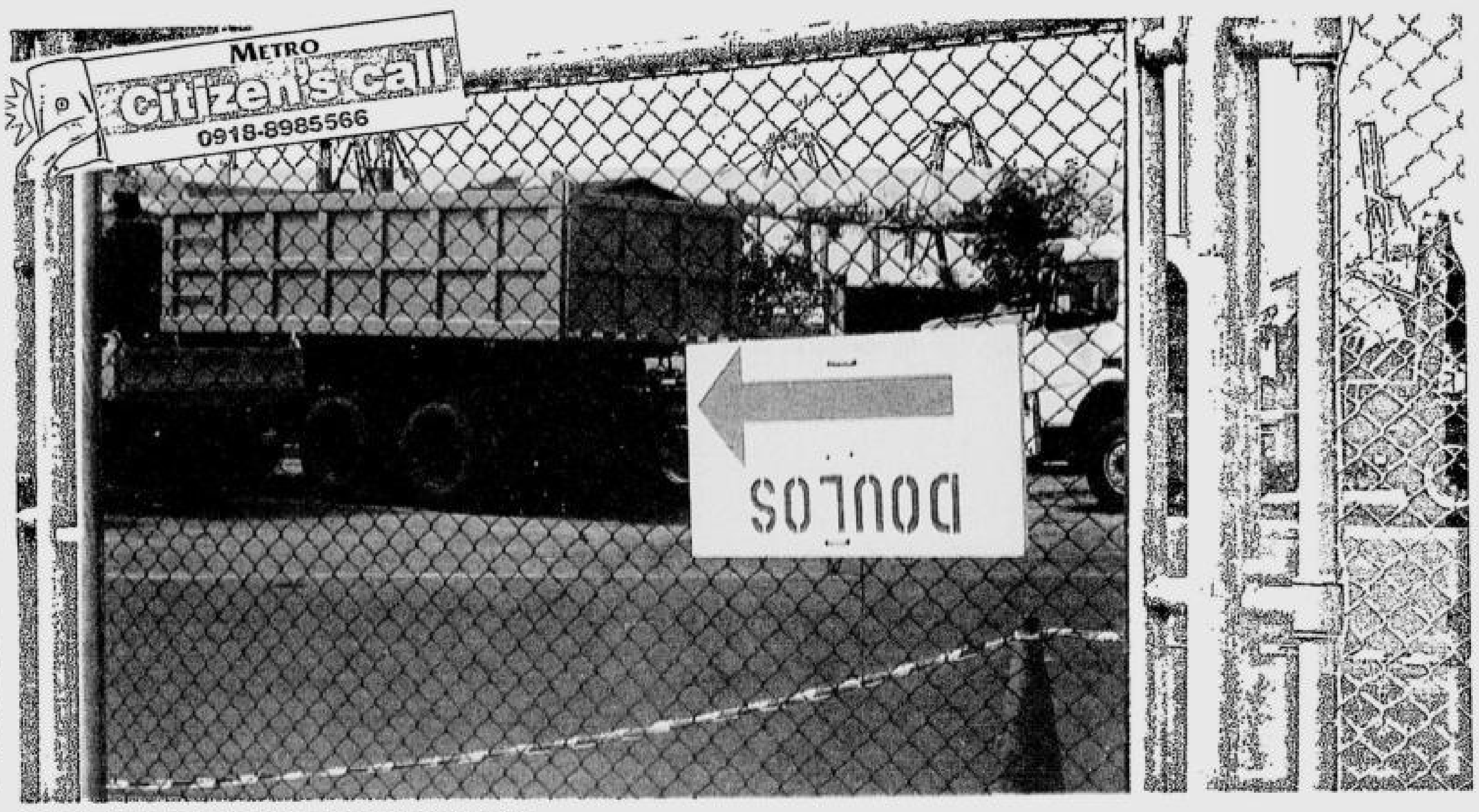
Garet added that the ad firm "ignored the threat Typhoon 'Milenyo' posed to public safety and decided to let its huge commercial billboard … remain as is" as the typhoon struck Metro Manila.

The Gumapons further alleged that based on photographs taken after the incident, the ad firm's steel billboard frame "was installed in violation of the specifications and provisions of the National Building Code and the National Structural Code for Buildings."

The INQUIRER tried but failed to contact JKJ for comment.

The Gumapon family claimed that the firm had offered to shoulder the burial expenses for Felipe but on the condition "that we desist from instituting criminal and/or civil proceedings against them."

"When we declined their offer, their lawyer scoffed at us and challenged my family to take legal action … We found this … absolutely callous and uncalled for in light of the fact that we had just lost the patriarch of our family through their criminal negligence," the family said.



WHAT'S WRONG WITH THIS PICTURE?
On her way to see the MV Doulos last weekend, INQUIRER contributor Ross Harper Alonso spotted this sign on a gate at Pier 13 in Manila's South Harbor. She texted the following observation to Metro Citizen's Call: "The MV Doulos is an international floating book shop that brings knowledge, hope and help to developing countries. To show our appreciation for their years of meaningful service, the Philippines could only manage a recycled sign to give directions. Pretty embarrassing if you were waiting in line to see the books onboard along with hundreds of visitors that included children, students, foreign press and embassy personnel. Some thought it was funny to see our country's favorite motto, *'Pwede na yan,'* and a harbor employee's lazy handiwork displayed with pride on a gate. Others felt the Doulos deserved a little more respect instead of writing its name in a way that could suggest the ship has gone belly up."

PHOTO CONTRIBUTED BY BETTINA YANG

METRO Citizen's call

0918-8985566

CALLING the attention of the Metropolitan Manila Development Authority. Buses and jeeps have turned the corner of Roxas Boulevard and MIA Road into a terminal, causing traffic jams every day.

—**FERDIE VILLA, Bacoor, Cavite**

Zuzzuaregi Street in Old Balara, Quezon City used to be a squatters' colony until it was made an alternative route to Commonwealth (now Don Mariano Marcos Avenue). Sadly, the people living in the area have made the sidewalks their parking spaces and the road their playground. This is a two-way street so you can just imagine how heavy traffic gets in the area.

—**GRACHEL CASTRO, Capitol Hills, Quezon City**

Here on Bagumbong Road, Caloocan City, there is no one managing traffic. The road is undergoing repair and cementing work, and the one-way traffic scheme being implemented is a source of dismay and mayhem for motorists every day.

—**JUN FAUSTINO, Bagumbong, Caloocan City**

San Juan police told to 'shoot' residents

By Edson C. Tandoc Jr.

PEOPLE FOND OF LOITERING IN the streets of San Juan from late in the afternoon until midnight should be prepared to have their picture taken.

The San Juan police has started implementing "Oplan Tambay Photo Sita"—a campaign aimed at setting up a "data base" of persons, mostly teenagers, frequenting streets and sidewalks in the small town from late in the afternoon to midnight, police chief Supt. Rodelio Jocson said yesterday.

"This is an effective crime deterrent because these persons will think twice before starting fights or figuring in misunderstandings," Jocson also told the INQUIRER.

The strategy was launched to address the cases of brawls and physical injuries in the town which usually erupt between groups of teenagers and even adults, triggered by reasons as petty as one group feeling offended by a person in another group staring at them.

San Juan is small but it is surrounded by crowded urban poor communities in the nearby cities of Manila and Quezon, the police official said.

Under the project, policemen from the police community relations and the city mobile unit, armed with digital cameras, patrol key streets and take pictures of groups of bystanders, Jocson explained.

People can refuse to have their picture taken but Jocson said the photographs will only be used for "verification and record purposes."

He said the scheme could also come in handy for parents looking for their missing children.

Bystanders in the town have been cooperative so far: Police have already stored over 100 group pictures in the last seven days—and most persons in the photographs were smiling, Jocson added.

According to him, cases of physical injuries and street fights have also gone down after they started implementing the scheme although he could not back up his observation with any statistics.

Of the 21 barangays in the town, Jocson said that incidents of physical injuries were most common in Barangays Sta. Lucia, Corazon de Jesus, St. Joseph, Salapan, San Perfecto, Batis, Kabayanan, Isabelita and Pedro Cruz.

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Pateros proud of 'suspended' barangay officials

By Julie M. Aurelio

IN THE MUNICIPALITY OF PATEROS, the officials of two barangays—Poblacion and Tabacalera—are literally "suspended."

For instead of being built on the ground, the barangay halls of the two areas are built above the street, just like a pedestrian overpass.

The Poblacion barangay hall is situated above the busy G. Flores Street. Folks described the one-story structure as the "hanging" or "suspended" barangay hall. It is supported by pillars straddling both sides of the street, allowing jeepneys, tricycles and even garbage trucks to pass underneath the building with ease.

Barangay Captain Eddie Reyes described the hall, completed in 1996, as the product of Pinoy ingenuity.

"Some barangays in our town are so poor that they cannot afford a piece of land for their own barangay hall. In fact, we used to rent a private lot on S. Tuazon Street where we put up a hall for the community," he said.

In 1994, Reyes learned about Barangay Ugong in Pasig, which had built a "suspended" barangay hall.

"Our barangay didn't have a lot of its own, so I thought, 'Why not build the hall above the street?'" he said.

After consulting the members of the barangay, Reyes and his kagawads passed a resolution asking the Pateros municipal government for permission to construct a barangay hall on G. Flores St., a stone's throw away from the town's commercial area.

The simple, one-story structure was designed by architect Teodoro Santos, then the town's acting municipal engineer.

Six pillars support the weight of the hall while three beams support the foundation. Two flights of stairs lead to the structure which measures 80-sq m and has a vertical clearance of 14.5 feet.

Due to its location, visitors are always assured of a strong breeze to cool them down. From the balcony, one can see tricycles disappearing under the structure, only to come out at the other end of the street.

Not everyone in the barangay, however, was excited about the project.

"They said we couldn't possibly push through with the project. Some councilors claimed that we didn't have a project study, that there was no proper bidding process, that we didn't have clearance from the DPWH (Department of Public Works and Highways)," Reyes said.

Then Pateros Mayor Jose "Pepe" Capco Jr., older brother of incumbent Mayor Rosendo Capco, however, was supportive of the project.

"The mayor really fought for this hall to be built. The councilors who opposed the project even charged us before the Ombudsman, but in the end the charges were dropped," Reyes said.

Work on the Poblacion barangay hall finally began in August 1994 but construction took nearly two years due to lack of funding.

The structure was finally inaugurated in January 1996. The total cost: Around P600,000.

In March 1997, Reyes's brother-in-law, Romeo Garcia, the barangay captain of Tabacalera, decided to follow suit.

Like Reyes, Garcia used to hold office in a building on a rented lot.

"We saw that it could be done in Poblacion, so I thought, why not in my barangay?" he said.

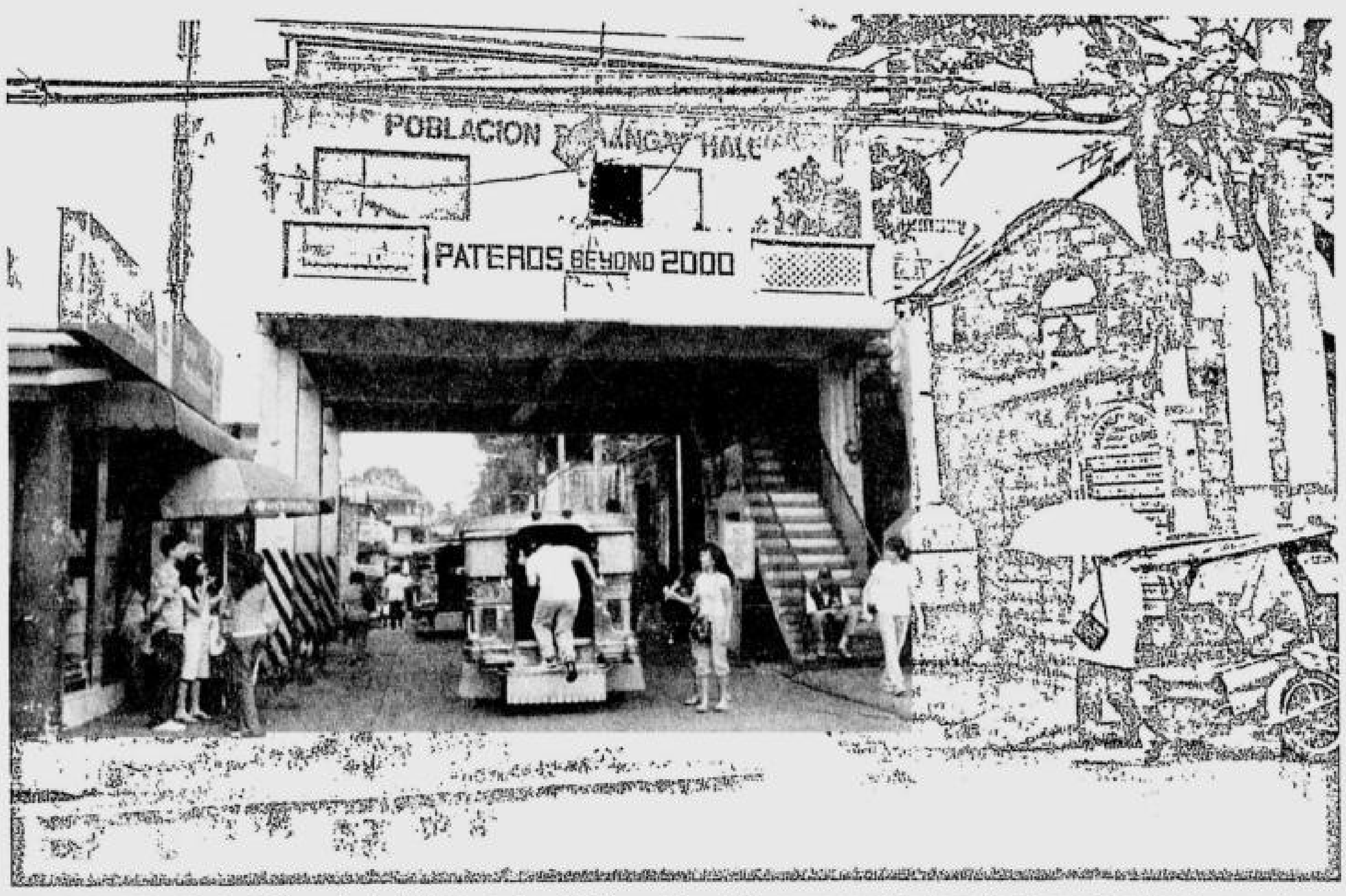
It only took eight months for the Tabacalera barangay hall to be built, and without much opposition from local officials and residents. Erecting the structure cost them around P 1.1 million.

By the end of 1997, Garcia was already receiving guests at his brand new office which was situated above C. Sexon Street.

Both halls are equipped with a kitchen, a toilet and offices for the Sangguniang Kabataan and barangay captain.

Inspired by their example, other barangays with similar predicaments have also erected their own "hanging" halls: Barangay Malinaw in Pasig and Barangay Wawa in Taguig.

"Our old barangay office didn't even have running water and a restroom. It was really pitiful. This hall is a far cry from what we used to have," Reyes said, looking around his office with a fond eye.



BARANGAY Poblacion's "hanging hall" is located on G. Flores Street. Barangay residents say having such a structure can be both an advantage and a disadvantage. On the plus side, because of its unusual location, everybody knows where the barangay hall is located. On the down side, going to the barangay hall can be quite strenuous due to its two flights of stairs.

CONTRIBUTED PHOTO

Ordinance filed on road safety in QC

By DJ Yap

BICYCLES, PEDICABS AND PUSHCARTS without taillights or reflectors are no longer welcome on Quezon City's thoroughfares at night.

In a move to prevent road accidents, city councilors have enacted an ordinance banning vehicles without motors that do not have illuminating devices on the streets.

Under the ordinance, any resident who owns a nonmotor vehicle, such as a bicycles, pedicab or pushcart, shall be required to register the vehicle with the barangay chair.

They shall also be required to install illuminating devices such as reflectors, taillights, reflector stickers, and even compact discs, which reflect light and catch people's attention in the dark.

The nonmotor vehicles shall be prohibited from plying the city highways and roads without the reflectors, according to the ordinance.

The measure also authorizes police officers, barangay officials and watchmen to confiscate and impound vehicles violating the ordinance.

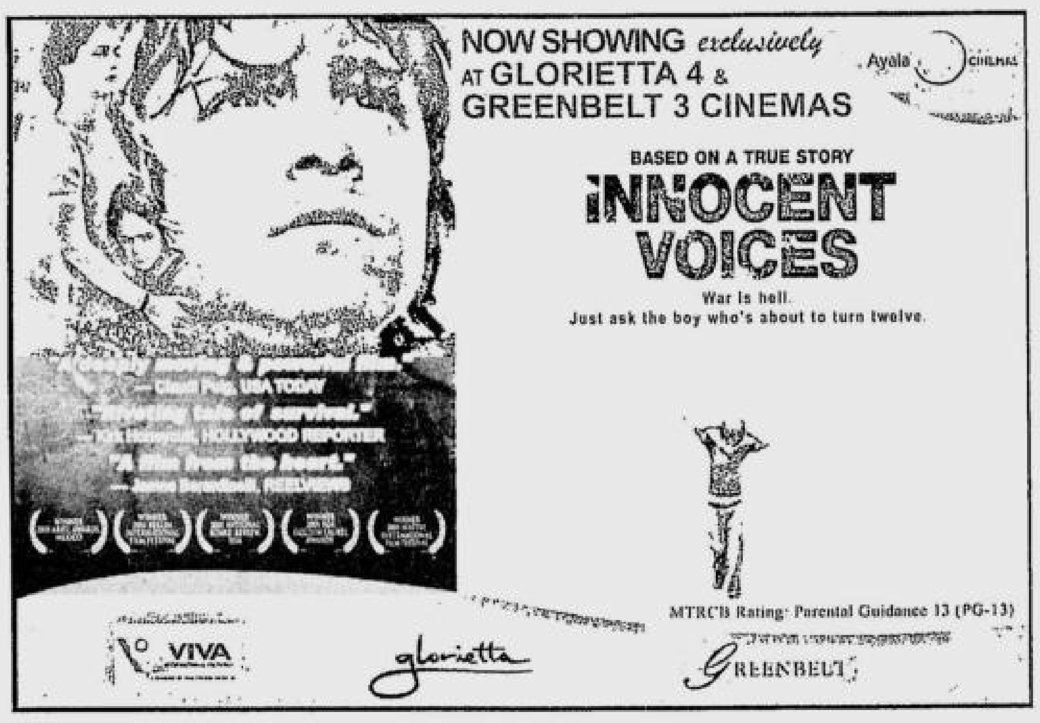
The proponents said they want to curb road mishaps involving nonmotor vehicles, which tend to rise during nighttime.

Violations will carry a corresponding penalty: First-time offenders may claim their confiscated vehicle only upon payment of a P300 fine and presentation of reflector materials to be mounted on the vehicle.

Second offenders shall pay a P500 fine and be required to install the reflector on the vehicle, while third offenders shall be fined P2,000, or be meted a week-long jail term, or both, at the discretion of the court.

DID YOU KNOW

ON JAN. 22, 1987, exactly 20 years ago, 13 farmers were killed while more than 80 other people were wounded in what is now known as the Mendiola Massacre. The incident, however, is not the only violent clash between protesters and antiriot policemen in the area in recent memory. In August 1983, a group of young people broke away from the funeral procession of former Sen. Benigno Aquino Jr. and went to Mendiola Bridge (now Don Chino Roces Bridge). There they had a confrontation with the police, leading to the death of a student. The following month, people protesting Aquino's assassination clashed with troops positioned in Mendiola. Eleven died, most of them by gunfire. In May 2001, thousands of deposed President Joseph Estrada's supporters stormed Mendiola on their way to Malacañang. The riot left four dead people and about 100 injured. *Cyril L. Bonabente, Inquirer Research*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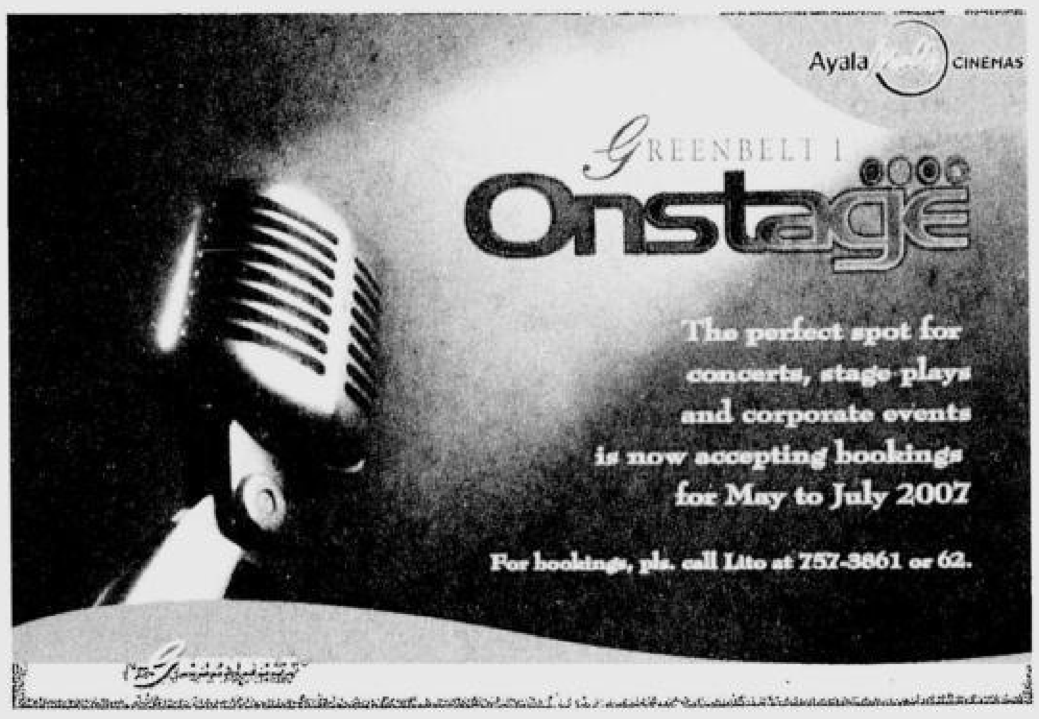
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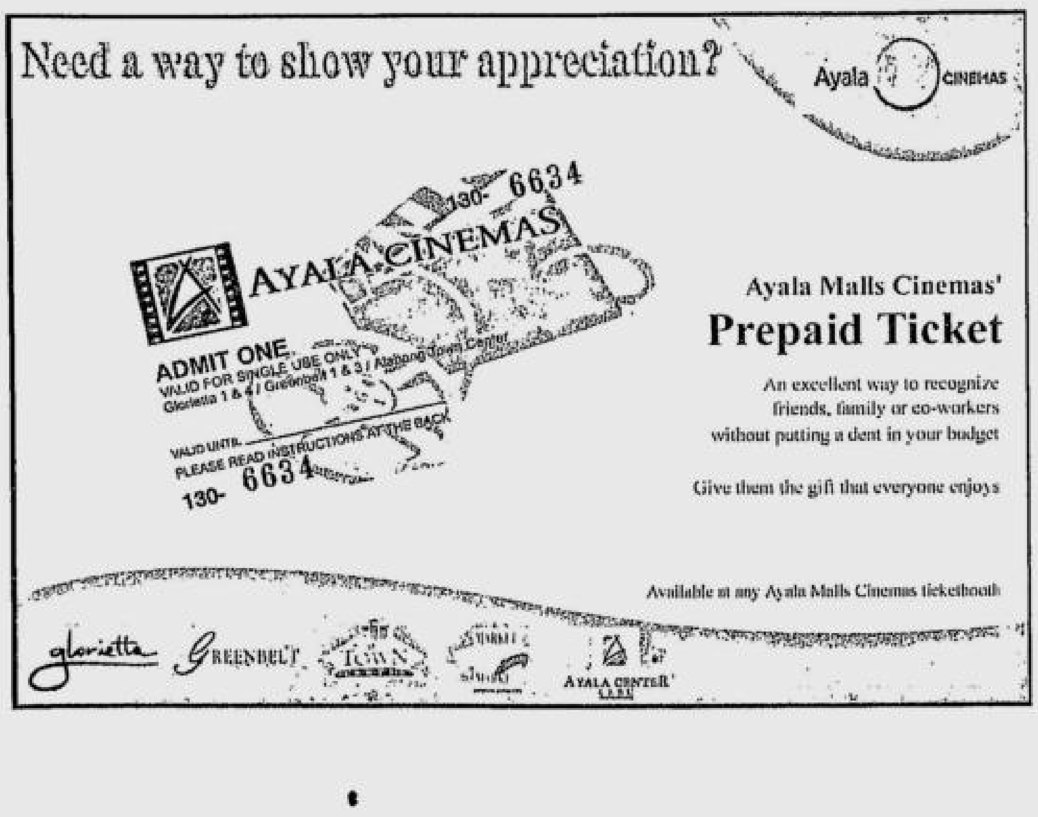
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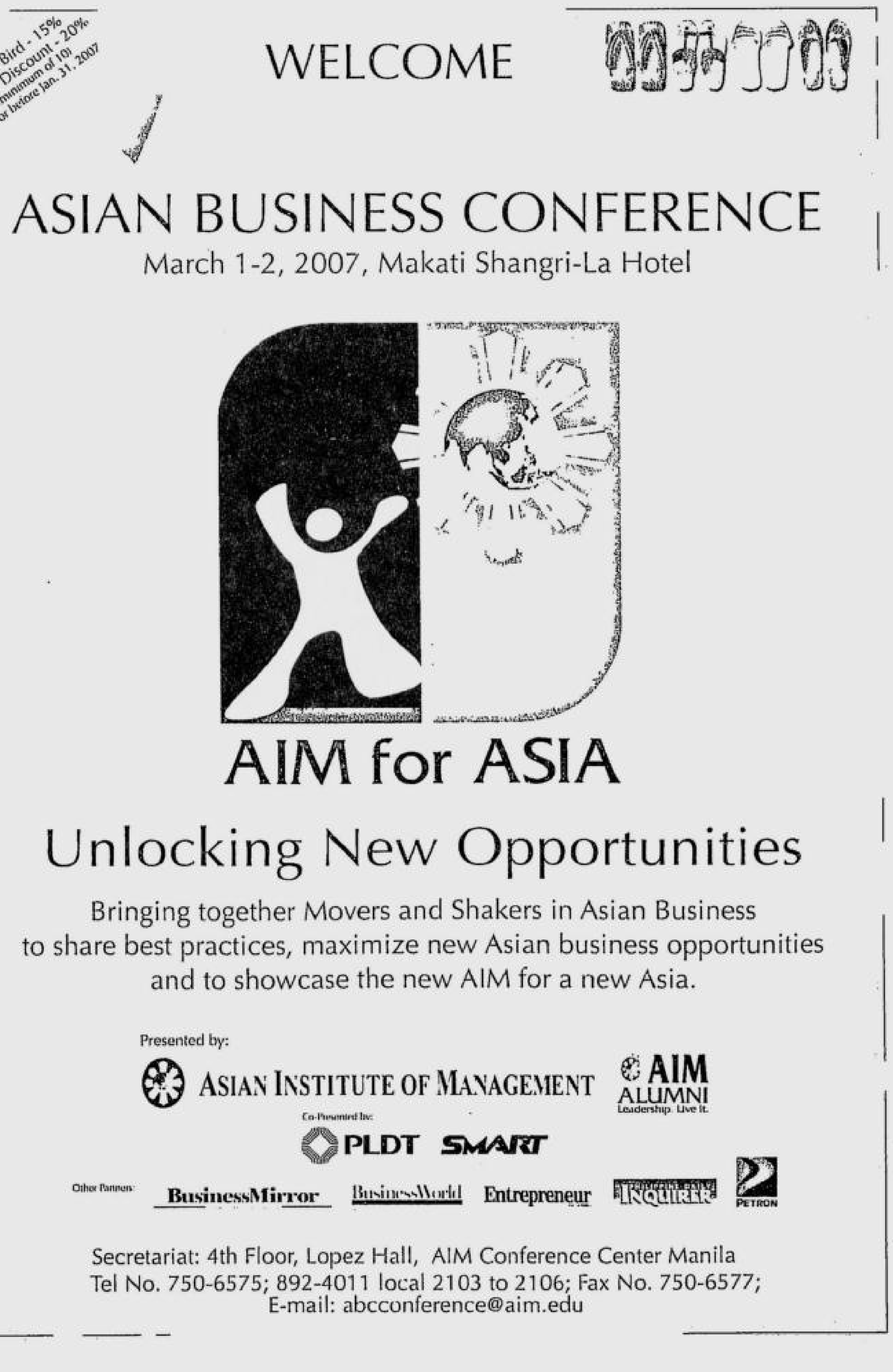
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Costly day in Iraq for US: Crash, clash kill 20

BAGHDAD—US FORCES SUFfered one of their costliest days in Iraq on Saturday when 20 troops were killed, including 13 on a helicopter and five in a clash in a Shiite holy city that the US Military blamed on militiamen.

Two bombs kept up the pressure on Sunday. One killed six people on a bus in the center of Baghdad and the other, a car bomb, killed one in the capital. The past week has seen a spike in bombings as the government prepares a crackdown in Baghdad.

The battle at a government building in Kerbala was the bloodiest for US troops in the Shiite south in two years and occurred as President George W. Bush presses leaders of the Shiite majority to crack down on militias from their community.

Hours after the loss of all 13 passengers and crew aboard a Blackhawk transport helicopter, the US Military said five soldiers were killed and three wounded in the Kerbala clash. Two other soldiers were killed elsewhere, and the deaths of two killed on Friday were also announced.

It was unclear whether the helicopter was shot down.

Residents near Baquba in violent Diyala province northeast of Baghdad said they saw a helicopter in flames in the air.

It was the deadliest day for US forces since Bush said 10 days ago he was sending about 20,000 more troops to Iraq to try to prevent sectarian civil war between Shiite Muslims and the once-dominant Sunni Arab minority. His plans have run into resistance from opposition Democrats who now control Congress.

The US Military said on Sunday a brigade of around 3,200 soldiers had arrived in Baghdad, the first of some 17,000 planned reinforcements for the city, and it would be fully operational by the start of February.

Thousands of pilgrims are thronging Kerbala, 110 km south of Baghdad, at the start of the 10-day rite of Ashura, a highpoint of the Shiite calendar and a target before for attacks by al-Qaida and other Sunnis.

"The Provincial Joint Coordination Center (PJCC) in Kerbala was attacked with grenades, small arms and indirect fires by an illegally armed militia group," the US Military said in a statement, apparently blaming Shiite militiamen rather than Sunni insurgents whom it usually refers to as "terrorists."

"Five US soldiers were killed and three wounded while repelling the attack." It made no mention of attackers killed or detained and officials did not immediately respond to queries on how the assailants' identity was established.

Relations have become strained between Washington and the Shiite-led Iraqi government as the United States presses Baghdad to rein in Shiite militias blamed for death squad killings and tries to limit the influence of Shiite Iran.

Not since US troops fought street battles with the Mehdi Army of Shiite cleric Muqtada al-Sadr in southern Iraq in 2004 have US forces had such heavy casualties in the region.

Sadr remains a potent force, both inside government behind Shiite Prime Minister Nuri al-Maliki, where the Mehdi Army has been accused by Washington of being the greatest threat to Iraq.

Aides to Sadr accused Washington of trying to provoke a confrontation by arresting one of its spokespersons on Friday. *Reuters*

Turkey police arrest teen in editor slay

ISTANBUL, TURKEY—THE TURKISH POLICE on Saturday arrested a 17-year-old suspect in the killing of a newspaper editor who championed Armenian rights, Turkish authorities said.

The editor, Hrant Dink, 52, a Turk of Armenian descent, was shot Friday afternoon outside the office of his newspaper, Agos. A gunman was recorded by a surveillance camera nearby, and the police appealed to the public for help in identifying him.

On Saturday night, Ogun Samast was captured in Samsun, a Black Sea port, after his father recognized his images from the surveillance video and notified the police in Trabzon, their hometown, said Muammer Guler, Istanbul's governor, at a news conference just before midnight.

"The suspect was captured in Samsun on a passenger bus destined to Trabzon, together with all the evidence, including his gun and the white beret" seen in the video, Guler said.

Samast, an unemployed secondary school graduate who arrived in Istanbul a week ago, admitted killing Dink, the Samsun police said.

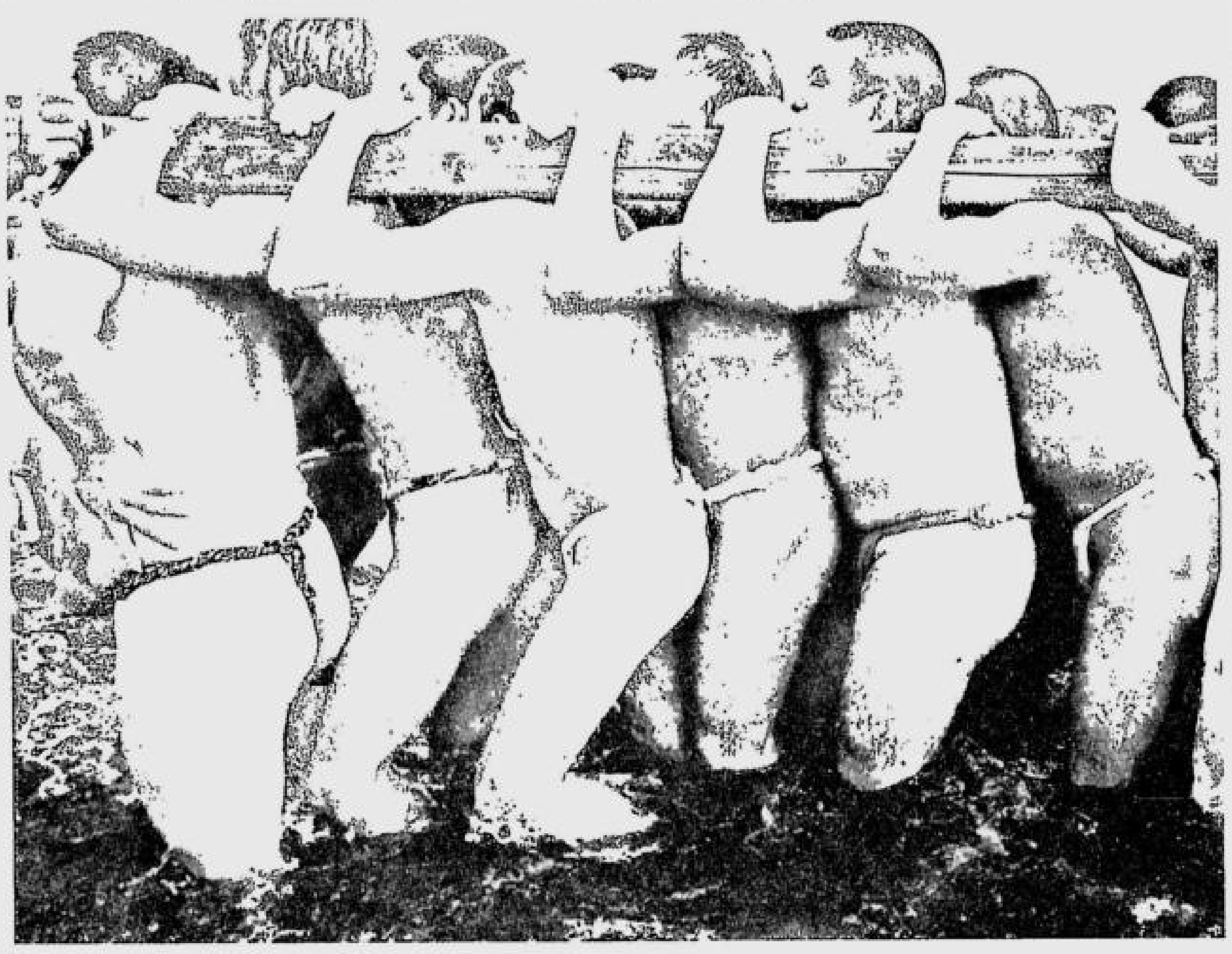
The police are also looking into possible links between Samast and the killing of a Catholic priest, Andrea Santaro, last February. The assailant was a 16-year-old who, like the priest and Samast, was from Trabzon.

Prime Minister Recep Tayyip Erdogan praised the efforts of the security forces Saturday and expressed satisfaction that an arrest had been made before Dink's funeral on Tuesday. "We're going to continue investigations with the same determination," Erdogan told the reporters, assuring that the arrest was only the start.

Guler said at a news conference earlier Saturday that Samast had visited the Agos office on Friday. He apparently posed as a university student hoping to meet Dink, whose secretary told the young man he would need an appointment.

The secretary later saw him loitering outside the office before Dink was attacked, Guler said.

Kazim Kolcuoglu, head of the Istanbul Bar Association, noting that Samast and the killer of Santaro were under 18, said that minors in Turkey are used in slayings because they face lower penalties than an adult convicted of the same crime. *NYT*



JAPANESE FESTIVAL

Participants wearing the traditional "fundoshi" or loincloth carry a "mikoshi" or portable shrine during the festival of Enoshima midwinter mikoshi chastening meeting on the coast of the Sagami Bay in Fujisawa, south of Tokyo Jan. 21. This festival is part of Japan's Coming of Age Day celebrations and is a midwinter ceremony in the sea with the "mikoshi" or portable shrines. REUTERS

Man survives fall from 17th floor of hotel

MINNEAPOLIS—A MAN CRASHED through a double-paned window in a hotel and plummeted 16 floors—but survived when he was caught by a roof overhang.

Joshua S. Hanson, 29, of Blair, Wisconsin, was taken to a hospital. Police and fire officials said he had multiple broken bones and internal injuries.

The man must have "an angel on his shoulder or something," said police Lt. Dale Barsness. "He's a lucky guy."

According to a police report, Hanson and two friends returned from a night of drinking at about 1:30 a.m. Saturday. When the elevator reached the 17th floor, Hanson ran down a short hallway toward a floor-to-ceiling window, Barsness said.

He apparently lost his balance and crashed through the glass, then fell 300 feet (90 meters), landing on the roof overhang one floor up from the street.

The window was double-paned and had a safety bar, said Tom Mason, general manager of the Hyatt.

Police said Hanson was conscious and communicating when he was taken off the overhang.

"This has never happened before," said Mason, who added that hotel officials will investigate and take whatever steps to ensure the hotel's safety. *AP*

Colombia gov't ensnared in paramilitary scandal

BOGOTA, COLOMBIA—THE GOVERNment of President Alvaro Uribe, the largest recipient of American aid outside the Middle East, has found itself ensnared in a widening scandal as revelations surface of a secret alliance between some of the president's most prominent political supporters and paramilitary death squads.

Testimony this week from Salvatore Mancuso, a former paramilitary commander who admitted to orchestrating the killing of more than 300 people, as well as a document made public on Friday implicating more than a dozen politicians in the pact with paramilitaries, have injected fresh detail into a slow-burning scandal that has caused Colombia's elite political class to shudder in recent weeks.

Senior members of Uribe's government and Uribe himself have said that anyone shown to have had illegal ties to the paramilitaries, which terrorized Colombian cities and the countryside in the nation's internal war, which has gone on for decades, and made fortunes in cocaine trafficking, should be prosecuted in courts of law.

The scandal has already touched Uribe's Cabinet, with Sen. Alvaro Araujo, the brother of Foreign Minister Maria Consuelo Araujo, under investigation for collaborating with militias.

"If there's someone involved at the highest level, they will be fired," Francisco Santos, Colombia's vice president, said in an interview. "Scrutiny is fine for us," Santos said. "This country needs to know the whole truth."

Some of the details coming to light about the breadth of paramilitary activities are the result of a process set in motion by Uribe's own government, which has allowed paramilitary leaders to confess their crimes and pay reparations in exchange for reduced sentences of no more than eight years in prison.

Though some militia leaders have balked at the deal, much of Colombia has been gripped by the first such confession, that of Mancuso, a cattleman who helped found the paramilitary movement in the 1980s in an effort to combat leftist guerrillas.

New York Times News Service

ROCHOM P'ngieng, right, is fed by a woman claiming to be her mother, Rochom Chhoy, at their home Jan. 20, in Oyadao, Cambodia. P'ngieng went missing in 1988, at the age of eight. AP

'Father' of jungle woman willing to take DNA test

PHNOM PENH—THE MAN who claims to be the father of a Cambodian woman thought to have spent 19 years living in the jungle said Sunday that he was willing to take a DNA test to prove it.

But Sal Lou, a village police officer and member of the Pnong ethnic minority, said it was more important for the woman to receive medical care and urged local and international donors to help.

"If possible I am willing to let her take a DNA test, but I don't think that's important because she is definitely my daughter. What we need now is to check her health instead of finding out whether she is mine," he said.

The mysterious woman was first spotted on Jan. 10, when she emerged naked from the jungles of Ratanakkiri, about 600 kilometers (400 miles) northeast of Phnom Penh, to steal food from a local farmer.

Sal Lou claims that she is his daughter Rochom P'ngieng, now 27, who went missing while herding water buffalo in 1988.

If she is indeed his daughter, no one knows what happened to her over the intervening two decades.

Some fellow villagers doubt that she was truly living in the wild all that time, pointing to her well-trimmed hair and neat fingernails. *AFP*

Serbs vote in key election

BELGRADE, SERBIA—SERBS VOTED SUNday in general elections that could determine whether the troubled Balkan nation will continue with pro-Western reform or return to its nationalist past.

The vote is the first since Serbia became independent last year with the breakup of its union with Montenegro. Shortly after the vote, a UN plan for the future of the Kosovo province is expected to be proposed.

More than 6.6 million voters will choose among 20 political parties, ranging from ultranationalists and conservatives to the pro-Western reformists and liberals. Parties must receive a minimum 5 percent of the vote to earn a place in the 250-member parliament.

Challenges facing the next parliament and government include handling the dispute over Kosovo's status, and Western demands for the arrest of war crimes fugitive Ratko Mladic.

Another priority will be improving the economy. Through reforms since 2000 have helped Serbia recover, and in 2005 post 5.9 percent economic growth, unemployment is still high at around 31 percent, and the average monthly salary is around euro250 ($324).

Opinion polls have indicated the vote will be a close race between the nationalist Serbian Radical Party, loyal to late ex-leader Slobodan Milosevic, and the Western-backed Democratic Party of President Boris Tadic.

Neither of the two groups is expected to win an outright majority, however, forcing them to partner with smaller parties to form a coalition.

Third-place in the vote was expected to go to the Popular Coalition, led by outgoing Prime Minister Kostunica, which would give the party a key advantage in deciding which of the two frontrunners to team up with for a majority to govern.

Though Kostunica's government has followed a pro-Western course, emphasizing reforms and vowing closer relations with the European Union, it has failed to meet the top Western demand of capturing and extraditing Mladic to the UN war crimes court in The Hague, Netherlands. *AP*

NATIONAL FOOD AUTHORITY
Baloy, Cagayan de Oro City
Regional Office 10

Standard Form Number: SF-GOOD-05
Revised on. July 28, 2004

007 Trucking/Hauling Services (Rebidding)

INVITATION TO APPLY FOR ELIGIBILITY AND TO BID

The National Food Authority, Region 10, through its Bids and Awards Committee (BAC), invites Truckers/ Hauler Owners/Operators/Contractors to apply for eligibility and to bid for the hereunder project.

Name of Project	Contract for the Supply of 2007 Trucking/Hauling Services (REBIDDING)
Location	Cagayan de Oro City Pier Disport to NFA-Cagayan de Oro City Owned/Contracted Warehouses/ NFA-Camiguin, Misamis Occidental, Lanao del Norte and Lanao del Sur Warehouses
Brief Description	Contract involves the hauling of bags of NFA rice from Cagayan de Oro City Pier Disport to NFA-Cagayan de Oro/Region 10 owned/leased warehouses and Lanao del Sur

CONTRACT NO.	DESTINATION PROVINCE. WAREHOUSE	ESTIMATED VOLUME IN BAGS OF 50 kg	MINIMUM NUMBER OF TRUCKS REQUIRED	MINIMUM NET LOAD CAPACITY REQUIRED (bags)	RATE PER BAG OF 50 kg (Php)	APPROVED BUDGET CEILING (Php)	BID DOCS PER LOT PER CONTRACT (Php)
7-1a	CAGAYAN DE ORO CITY PIER DISPORT TO: GID PATAG, GID BALOY, NFA-CAGAYAN DE ORO CITY / CONTRACTED WAREHOUSES	500,000 bags at 100,000 bags per lot (a total of 5 lots)	8 trucks per lot	4,000 bags per lot	4.51	2,255,000.00	2,500.00
7-5a	CAMIGUIN LAKAS FLGC	65,000	5	2,000	30.25	1,966,250.00	4,000.00
7-6a	LANAO NORTE GID BARAAS	140,000	8	3,200	15.40	2,156,000.00	4,000.00
7-7a	GID LALA	60,000	6	2,400	25.58	1,534,800.00	4,000.00
7-8a	MISAMIS OCC. GID GANGO	125,000	8	3,200	31.90	3,987,500.00	4,000.00
7-9a	LANAO SUR GID MARAWI	50,000	6	2,400	22.28	1,114,000.00	4,000.00

Prospective bidders should have experience in undertaking a similar project within the last two (2) years with an amount of at least 50% of the proposed project for bidding, and have key personnel and equipment (owned) available for the prosecution of the project. The list of minimum equipment requirement is indicated in the Eligibility Forms. The Eligibility Check/Screening as well as the Preliminary Examination of Bids, shall use non-discretionary "pass/fail" criteria. Post-qualification of the lowest calculated bid shall be conducted.

All particulars relative to Eligibility Statement and Screening, Bid Security, Performance Security, Pre-Bidding Conference (s), Evaluation of Bids, Post-Qualification and Award of Contract shall be governed by the pertinent provisions of R.A.9184 and its Implementing Rules and Regulations (IRR).

The complete schedule of activities is listed as follows:

	ACTIVITIES	ADDRESS	DATE	TIME
1	Issuance of Bid Documents	2F, NFA-10 Regional Office, Baloy, Cagayan de Oro City	January 22-30, 2007	8:00AM-5:00PM Working Days
2.	Pre-bidding Conference	2F, NFA-10 Regional Office, Baloy, Cagayan de Oro City	January 31, 2007	1:30 PM
3.	Deadline for Submission and Receipt of Eligibility Requirements & Bid Documents	2F, NFA-10 Regional Office, Baloy, Cagayan de Oro City	February 12, 2007	1:30 PM
4.	Opening of Bids	2F, NFA-10 Regional Office, Baloy, Cagayan de Oro City	February 12, 2007	1:35 PM

The National Food Authority, Region 10 assumes no responsibility whatsoever to compensate or indemnify bidders for any expenses incurred in the preparation of the bid.

The National Food Authority, Region 10 reserves the right to accept or reject any Bid, and to annul the bidding process and reject all Bids at any time prior to contract award, without thereby incurring any liability to the Bidders.

(Sgd.) CAMILO D. MAGTRAYO
BAC Chairman

(PDI—January 22, 2007)

Vatican seeks dialogue, ties with China

VATICAN CITY—THE VATICAN HAS PLEDGED to pursue dialogue with the Chinese communist government aimed at establishing diplomatic ties, while Pope Benedict XVI is preparing a message for his suffering flock in China, where Catholics have sometimes been jailed or arrested for their loyalty to the pontiff.

A twofold strategy emerged from two days of high-level debate on China at the Vatican: continue to champion religious freedom in China while pursuing normalization with Beijing.

Benedict, who called but did not attend the meeting on Saturday, received a detailed briefing on proposals made during what the Vatican described as frank debate.

Participants included Secretary of State Cardinal Tarcisio Bertone, who is the pope's top aide, and leading prelates from China, among them Hong Kong Cardinal Joseph Zen, who is an outspoken advocate for freedom of worship.

Following the talks, Benedict "benevolently has decided to write a letter to Catholics in China," the Vatican said in a statement, without indicating when the letter might be issued.

Asia News, a Vatican-affiliated news agency, said that it was likely Benedict would "directly" take up specific questions as how to deal with illicit ordinations in the state-sanctioned Catholic church, which does not accept papal authority.

Emerging from the discussions "was the will to continue on the journey of a respectful and constructive dialogue with the governing authorities, to overcome past difficulties," the Vatican said.

"In addition, the hope was expressed that a normalization of relations on various levels, with the aim of allowing the peaceful and fruitful life of the faith of the Church and of working together for the good of the Chinese people and peace in the world, would be achieved," it said.

Vatican officials said that "on various levels" included diplomatic relations.

The Vatican has long indicated that it wants to establish diplomatic relations with Beijing, even at the cost of moving its embassy from Taiwan, but will not compromise on the tradition dictating that only the pope—and not a local church—can appoint bishops.

The Vatican has vigorously denounced Beijing's insistence on ordaining bishops without papal approval. Last month, Benedict expressed "great sorrow" over the latest such ordination, the third known case in 2006.

Zen has accused Beijing of reneging on a promise to stop the practice. China views papal appointments as interference in its internal affairs. *AP*

Castro battling for life—Chavez

RIO DE JANEIRO—AILING CUBAN LEADER Fidel Castro is fighting for his life, his friend and Venezuelan President Hugo Chavez said.

"He's back in Sierra Maestra and locked in a battle for his life," said Chavez, referring to Castro's legendary guerrilla war that toppled Cuban dictator Fulgencio Batista in 1959 and ushered in his Cuban Revolution.

"There are those who want Fidel to die," Chavez said alluding to a recent Spanish press report that Castro, 80, was gravely ill following three failed operations.

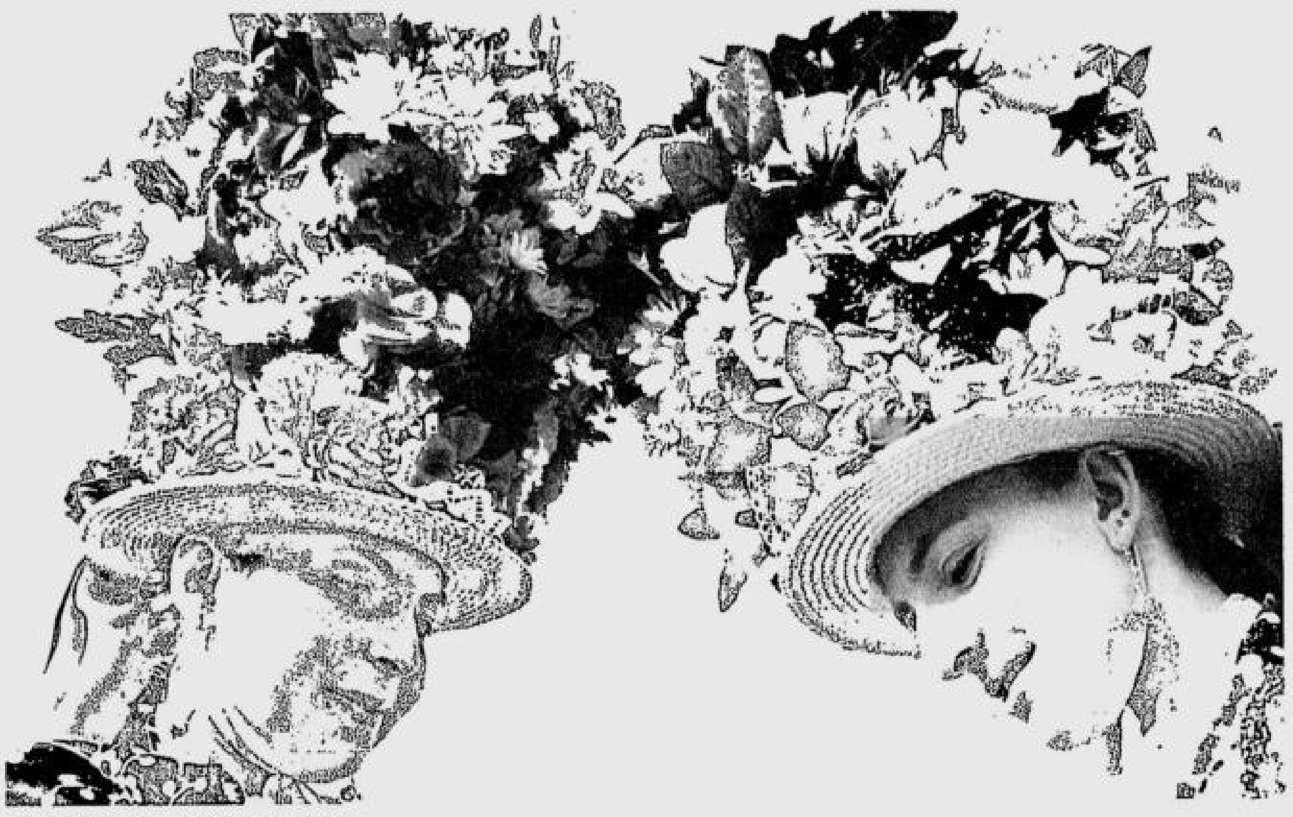
"But I spoke to him a few days ago ... We trust he will recover completely," Chavez said.

Chavez has visited Castro and often speaks to him by telephone.

There has been mounting speculation over the condition of Castro, who has not been seen in public since being taken ill in late July.

Last week, a US intelligence chief said Castro was terminally ill and might have only days to live.

"I don't know when he's going to die," said Chavez. "I hope he lives another 80 years, I hope he lives another 100 years, but Fidel Castro is one of those men who will never die." *AFP*



SAINT SEBASTIAN DAY

Two dancers celebrate Saint Sebastian day in the city of Aldan, Northen Spain, Jan. 20. The "Dance of San Sebastian" takes place every Jan. 20 in Aldan, and dates back 350 years. REUTERS

Pakistan intel accused of promoting Taliban

QUETTA, PAKISTAN—THE MOST EXPLOSIVE question about the Taliban resurgence here along the border between Afghanistan and Pakistan is this: Have Pakistani intelligence agencies been promoting the Islamic insurgency?

The government of Pakistan vehemently rejects the allegation and insists that it is fully committed to helping US and Nato forces prevail against the Taliban militants who were driven from power in Afghanistan in 2001.

But Western diplomats in both countries and Pakistani opposition figures say that Pakistani intelligence agencies—in particular the powerful Inter-Services Intelligence and Military Intelligence—have been supporting a Taliban restoration, motivated not only by Islamic fervor but also by a long-standing view that the jihadist movement allows them to assert greater influence on Pakistan's vulnerable western flank.

More than two weeks of reporting along this frontier, including dozens of interviews with residents on each side of the porous border, leaves little doubt that Quetta is an important base for the Taliban. There are many signs that Pakistani authorities are encouraging the insurgents, if not sponsoring them.

The evidence is provided in fearful whispers, and it is anecdotal.

At Jamiya Islamiya, a religious school here in Quetta, Taliban sympathies are on flagrant display, and residents say students have gone with their teachers' blessings to die in suicide bombings in Afghanistan.

Three families whose sons had died as suicide bombers in Afghanistan said they were afraid to talk about the deaths because of pressure from Pakistani intelligence agents. Local people say dozens of families have had sons die as suicide bombers and fighters in Afghanistan.

One former Taliban commander said in an interview that he had been jailed by Pakistani intelligence officials because he would not go to Afghanistan to fight. He said that, for Western and local consumption, his arrest had been billed as part of Pakistan's crackdown on the Taliban in Pakistan. *NYT*

In California, a proposal to ban spanking

LOS ANGELES—AS A GENERAL RULE, LEGislators tend to begin their attack on bills once they have actually been written. But not much proposed legislation involves the backsides of children.

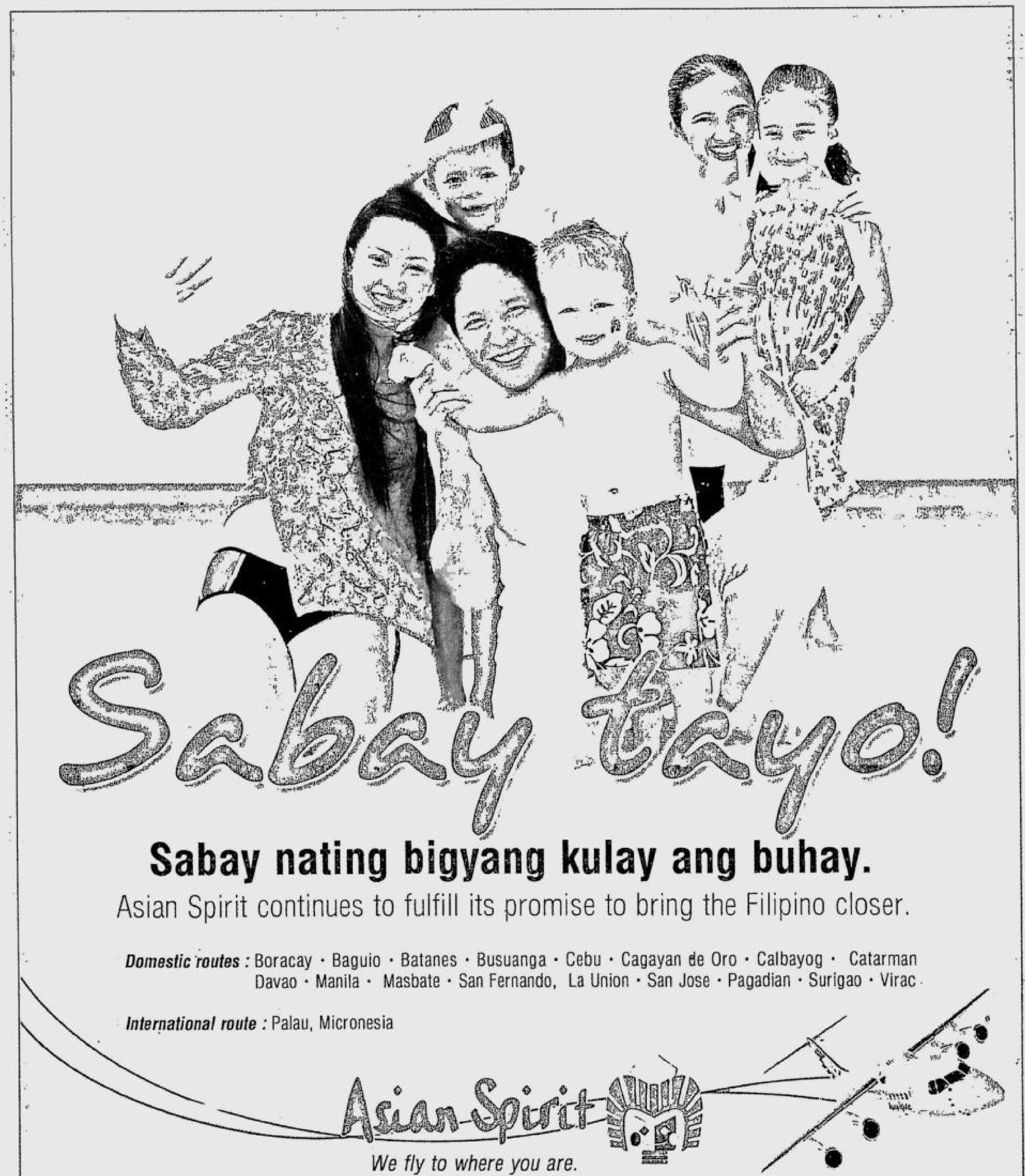
A Democratic assemblywoman from Mountain View says she will submit a bill next week—once it is drafted—proposing that California become the first state in the nation to make spanking of children 3 years old and under a misdemeanor. Penalties could include child-rearing classes for offenders to one year in jail.

Just the mention of the bill has become a minor statewide perturbation, sparking denouncements from many Republican lawmakers (the state Senate minority leader, Dick Ackerman, declared, "I'm trying to pick a word other than crazy, let me see, not well thought out."), heated debates among parents ("A bill should be passed to allow other parents to smack the parents of undisciplined children," wrote one Internet poster) and some self-reflection on behalf of the governor.

In an interview with The San Jose Mercury News, Gov. Arnold Schwarzenegger said that as a child he "got smacked about everything. That was the way Austria worked."

The governor said that when disciplining his four children, he and his wife, Maria Shriver, declined to spank. "I think any time we try to pass laws that say you've got to protect the kids, it's, in general, always good," he added.

The bill's sponsor, Assemblywoman Sally J. Lieber, said that her office had been inundated with calls since word of the proposed bill—which she will probably introduce next week—surfaced. The majority of the calls, she conceded, were against such legislation. *NYT*



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Amelie goes; Serena up /A28

Dumaguete gives up nat'l students loop, seeks unity

BAP Western Visayas regional director set to step down

By Ted S. Melendres

NEGROS ORIENTAL HAS DEcided not to host the Basketball Association of the Philippines' National Students Tournament scheduled next month in Dumaguete City.

PANGILINAN: Unity Congress convenor

Meanwhile, a key regional director from the Visayas is said to have given up on the BAP and is ready to join the unity efforts of Samahang Basketbol ng Pilipinas (SBP).

The twin developments came on the heels of the BAP's firing of its own president, Sen. Jinggoy Estrada, the resignation of director-spokesman Fritz Gaston and the decision of the Naascu league to abandon the association in the past two weeks.

In giving up the hosting job, Glynda Descuatan, co-chair of the Negros Oriental sports and cultural facilities management board, said they did not want to hamper the SBP's moves to unite all basketball groups in the country.

Negros Oriental Gov. George Arnaiz, the board's co-chair, approved the group's decision and its plan to send a representative to the SBP Unity Congress on Feb. 5 in Manila.

Ready to step down

The INQUIRER has also learned from reliable sources in the basketball community that Tony Agustin, the BAP regional director for Western Visayas, is ready to step down.

The sources said Agustin would join the congress to be presided over by business tycoon Manny V. Pangilinan, the SBP president.

The INQUIRER tried but failed to reach Agustin last night.

Agustin's resignation could trigger an "exodus of BAP officials in the provinces" to the SBP, one source close to Agustin said.

Gaston, the highest official so far to leave the BAP, said he would support the SBP's unity campaign.

The day after Estrada was fired last week, officials of the National Athletic Association of Schools, Colleges and Universities (Naascu) said they were bolting the BAP in order to help promote Pangilinan's moves to unify all basketball groups in the country.

Naascu president Dr. Jay Adalem said they expected more BAP member groups to join Pangilinan's unity call.

The SBP was created by a three-man panel composed of Pangilinan, former BAP president Joey Lina and then Pilipinas Basketball head Bernie Atienza based on a joint communique between the BAP and PB to unite all major basketball stakeholders in a new cage body.

Lifting of suspension

The agreement forged in Tokyo last year with the approval of Fiba, the international basketball federation, was one of the conditions the Fiba had set for the lifting of its suspension on the Philippines from international competitions.

The BAP sent out press releases last week that it would hold the students' tournament this year in Dumaguete City—despite the absence of an agreement with Negros Oriental authorities.

"Graham Lim (BAP secretary general) earlier relayed [the message to host the tournament] to the governor (Arnaiz), who in turn relayed it to the board," said Descuatan.

"We are also aware of the problems that beset Philippine basketball . . . It may not be timely to host (the national students' tournament)."

Descuatan said that due to the province's limited resources, the board "decided to prioritize" and would give up the chance to host the tournament, which the province also hosted last year.

"In the letter we have sent to . . . Graham Lim, we said we are not saying that this is the end," Descuatan said. "We are just saying 'not this time' because we have other priorities . . . But we are hoping that we will have a united stand in basketball."

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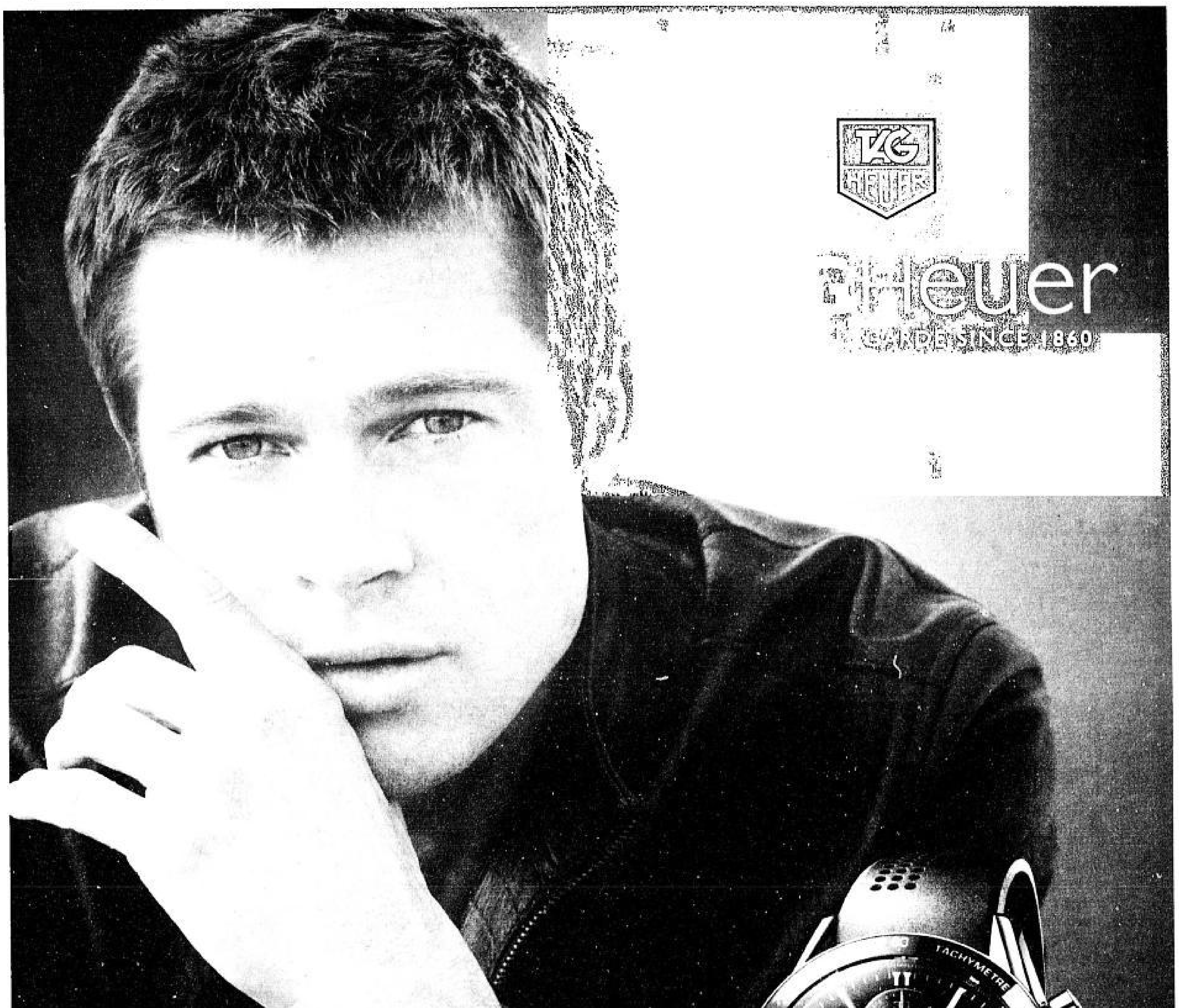

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Ramirez: President, Congress have last say on PSC changes

By June Navarro

PHILIPPINE SPORTS COMMISSION chair William "Butch" Ramirez sees as a welcome development the proposed amendment on the appointment of officials in the government sports agency.

But for it to happen, Ramirez said the blessing of President Macapagal-Arroyo and the nod of Congress will be the decisive factors.

"The proposed amendment is good, but I think it (the approval) is still the prerogative of the President," said Ramirez.

The Philippine Olympic Committee has filed, through Rep. Renato Unico Jr., a bill amending and upgrading Republic Act 6847, the law that created the PSC, the government arm for sports.

POC president Jose "Peping" Cojuangco Jr. announced during the recent PSA Awards Night that the bill seeks to give the Olympic body the power to recommend the PSC commissioners of its choice, among others, to maintain good ties between the two sports organizations.

Cojuangco also batted for a fixed tenure of six years for PSC commissioners to assure continuity in the long-term program of the agency.

"If everybody agrees, then I don't see any reason why it won't be passed," said Ramirez.

The proposed amendment also seeks to elevate the PSC to a cabinet level so the chairman can bring the cause of sports to cabinet meetings.

The POC chief also sought additional sports funding from horseracing and tax-free acquisition of equipment by the national sports associations.

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HAPEE-PCU'S Jason Castro (left) disputes the rebound with Kettle Korn's Frederick Hubalde in a recent game. ERIK ARAZAS

Crackshot boosts Ha Magnolia

By Jasmine W. Payo

A PAIR OF RESURGENT PERFORMANCES came just in time for Hapee-PCU and Magnolia Ice Cream last week.

Displaying sensational scoring efforts, Jason Castro of Hapee-PCU and Bonbon Custodio of Magnolia Ice Cream powered their squads to crucial victories in the ongoing Silver Cup tournament of the Philippine Basketball League.

Castro's heroics propelled the Teeth Masters to a 7-3 card and a playoff for an outright semifinal berth while Custodio kept the Spinners alive with a chance to reach the quarterfinals.

The two crackshots shared Player of the Week honors from the PBL scribes.

Custodio, surpassing a previous best of 19 points, exploded with 34 markers to lead Magnolia to a triple overtime victory against Kettle Korn-UST, 133-128, last Saturday.

After unloading 14 points in the fourth quarter, the 5-foot-11 Custodio also spearheaded the charge in the three extra periods.

Two days earlier, Castro also sizzled with 33 points to lift Hapee-PCU past Cebuana Lhuillier-Pera Padala in a 98-90 decision.

GAMES TUESDAY
(Olivarez College Sports Center)
2 p.m.—Hapee-PCI
vs Mall and More
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Banal stops Thai foe in ninth round, keeps streak

MANDAUE CITY—WORLD TITLE prospect Alex John Banal sustained his explosive winning streak, stopping Thailand's Terdkiat Jandaeng in the ninth round of their super flyweight bout here Saturday night.

The win improved the 18-year-old Banal's unbeaten slate to 11 wins, with 9 KOs and one draw, and lined him up for a WBO As-Pac Youth super flyweight bout, underneath the Z Gorres-Fernando Montiel WBO super flyweight title clash, on Feb. 26 in Cebu City.

Banal of the ALA Boxing Gym dominated Jandaeng despite a second-round gash due to an accidental clash of heads. He was blasting away at the outclassed Thai when referee Tony Pesons halted the fight in the ninth.

RP No. 1 flyweight Rocky Fuentes won by unanimous decision over Greg Mangan while the unbeaten Milan Milendo used a pricking jab and powerful body shots to beat Fabio Marfa, also by the same verdict.

Meanwhile, a clear win for Glen Masicampo turned into a controversial victory after his opponent Anton Olarte was given a standing knockdown count by referee Teddy Alivio and later declared unfit to continue.

Salven L. Lagumbay, contributor

BAP protest, a replay

Madame Lorna Kalaw Tirol
Readers' Advocate
Philippine Daily Inquirer
Makati City, Metro Manila

Re: Recah Trinidad's "Bare Eye"

Dear Madame Tirol:

Further to our letter of Jan. 8, 2007, relative to the blatant violation of the "Journalist's Code of Ethics" by Recah Trinidad, we are quoting hereunder his latest defamatory and malicious article, published in the Jan. 10, 2007 issue of the Philippine Daily Inquirer:

"Fiba Falls in Love with a Bedbug

"This is a chapter in the biography of a blood bedbug.

"Sen. Jinggoy Estrada on Monday bared a new fighting motto.

"Bedbugs are for crushing," he declared.

"Of course, Mr. Senator, sir.

"Unfortunately, this bug you had singled out was one of a kind.

"It doesn't only infest beds and suck blood.

"The flat, wingless pest inflicts and infects, causing misery in the national basketball community, to as far and wide as the international basketball scene.

"The thing has also proved durable, truly tough, unsinkable.

"After countless tries to smash it, the dirty bug is back again—now meaner, more menacing.

"Let me take care of him," Jinggoy, flashing a patriot's badge of courage, vowed before a function room packed with people who sincerely care for Philippine basketball.

"The young lawmaker, in popping black suit and red tie, appeared ready to go to war.

"He had just been fired as president of the troublesome Basketball Association of the Philippines.

"Jinggoy, nevertheless, came to the presscon to join major basketball stakeholders and reaffirm his affiliation with the Samahang Basketbol ng Pilipinas, a pioneering group headed by tycoon Manny Pangilinan which has been working double time for the reformation of basketball in the Philippines.

"Jinggoy showed up to fulfill a commitment, adding he came as a senator representing those who truly care for Philippine basketball.

* * *

"At the coffee shop of the Makati Shangri-La, Jinggoy later bared how the discredited BAP secgen Graham Lim had vehemently tried to dissuade him from coming to the unity affair.

"I would be untrue to myself if I did not show up," Jinggoy told a small group of media people that joined him for coffee.

BARE EYE

Recah Trinidad

"Isn't Graham Lim an out-and-out surot?" exclaimed B., a media person who helped invite people to the affair.

"What's surot in English? She was asked jokingly.

"Bedbug, what else?" B. retorted very seriously.

"There was uncontrolled laughter around the table.

"Now, the Fiba should listen and act once we've sent them the biography of this bedbug."

* * *

"A consensus was next reached: the best solution to the national basketball mess was to get rid of Graham Lim.

"For the record, Lim is a confirmed alien who had been deported but who has predictably resurfaced to sow dissension among those who were working for unity in Philippine basketball.

"Jinggoy was asked what he planned to do with Graham Lim.

"The senator smiled and lit another filtered cigarette.

"Jinggoy's cellphone beeped.

"The best solution is assassination," the senator mumbled while reading the text message.

"There was laughter again, followed by nodding silence among members of the small media group.

* * *

"Yes, there was no problem looking for a solution to the national basketball mess: get rid of the bold bug.

"But the bigger puzzle was how and why Graham Lim has been allowed to violate Philippine laws and at the same time terrorize the ranks of those who have been sincerely working for the renewal of Philippine basketball.

"He must have somebody big behind him, it was suggested.

"Definitely not President Arroyo," Jinggoy remarked.

"Fidel Ramos?" K. suggested, explaining Lim had in the past honored FVR's father with a major tournament called the Narciso Ramos Cup.

"What about Freddie Jalasco, FVR's son-in-law who also was BAP president?"

"FVR did not like him, besides, Jalasco is now also an ex son-in-law."

* * *

"Inevitably, the question of funding—where Lim has been drawing all necessary cash—had to be raised.

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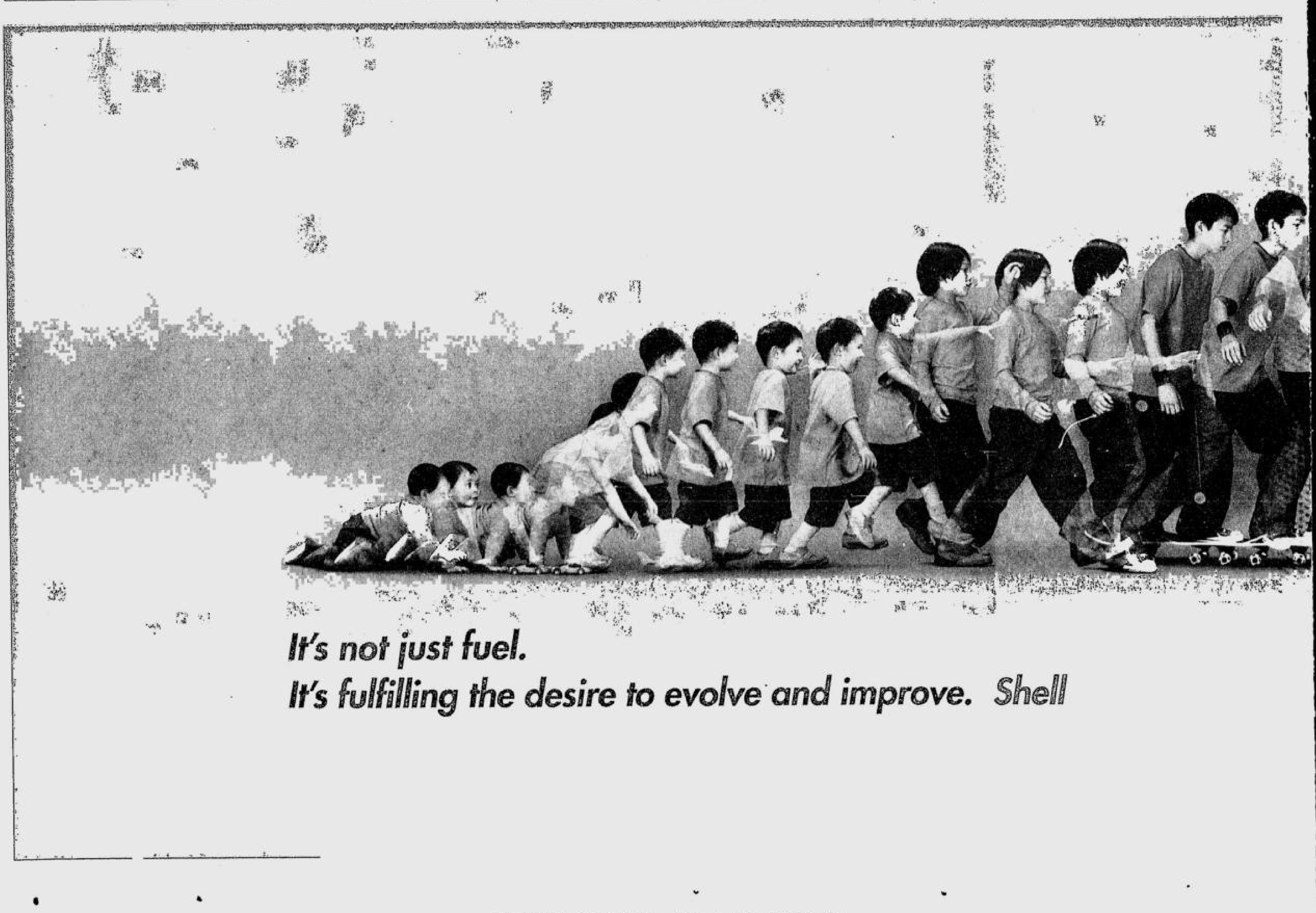
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pair pee, ives

The scoring rampage came as no surprise for Hapee-PCU coach Jun Noel since his nifty guard had been averaging second-best 15.9 points in the league, on top of 6.1 rebounds, 3.7 as-
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ALCANO faces unrated Japanese next.

Alcano, Lining gain All-Kansai quarters; Orcollo eliminated

REIGNING WORLD POOL CHAMPION RONNIE Alcano and Antonio Lining crushed their respective rivals yesteday to reach the quarterfinals of the 17th Annual All-Kansai 9-Ball Open at the Mag Suminoe Billiards Hall in Osaka, Japan.

The 34-year-old Alcano showed the door to Hiroshi Kamihashi of Japan, 9-5, while Lining booted out T. Fujimoto, 9-4, to remain in contention for the 1 million yen (P450,000) top prize in this tournament which uses the race-to-9, winner-breaks format.

Dennis Orcollo, acknowledged as the Philippines' billiard's money game king, failed to advance after taking a 9-4 loss from Taiwanese Lo Li-wen.

Ramil Gallego and Rolando Garcia, the two other Filipinos in the field, bowed out in the round of 32. Gallego lost to Alcano, 9-7, while Garcia took a 9-1 thumping from Japan's Y. Yano.

Alcano, who capped his spectacular rise to the top of world pool by beating German ace Ralf Souquet in the WPC finals in Manila last November, will face Japan's T. Takano for a semifinal berth.

Formidable rival

But Lining will be up against a formidable rival in defending champion and tournament top seed Masaaki Tanaka.

Takano advanced with a 9-5 win over S. Tsukenn while Tanaka downed Y. Akagariyama, 9-4.

The other quarterfinal pairings pit Yano against Doha Asian Games 8-ball gold medal winner Satoshi Kawabata and H. Mizushita vs Lo Li-wen.

Yano advanced by beating Y. Kimura, 9-2, Kawabata whipped N. Oi, 9-3, and Mizushita ousted H. Arita, 9-2.

Alcano is hoping to improve on his quarterfinal finish in the 2006 Super Cup in Taiwan last month. *Marlon Bernardino, contributor*

Norway 9-ball: Gomez, Peña 1-2

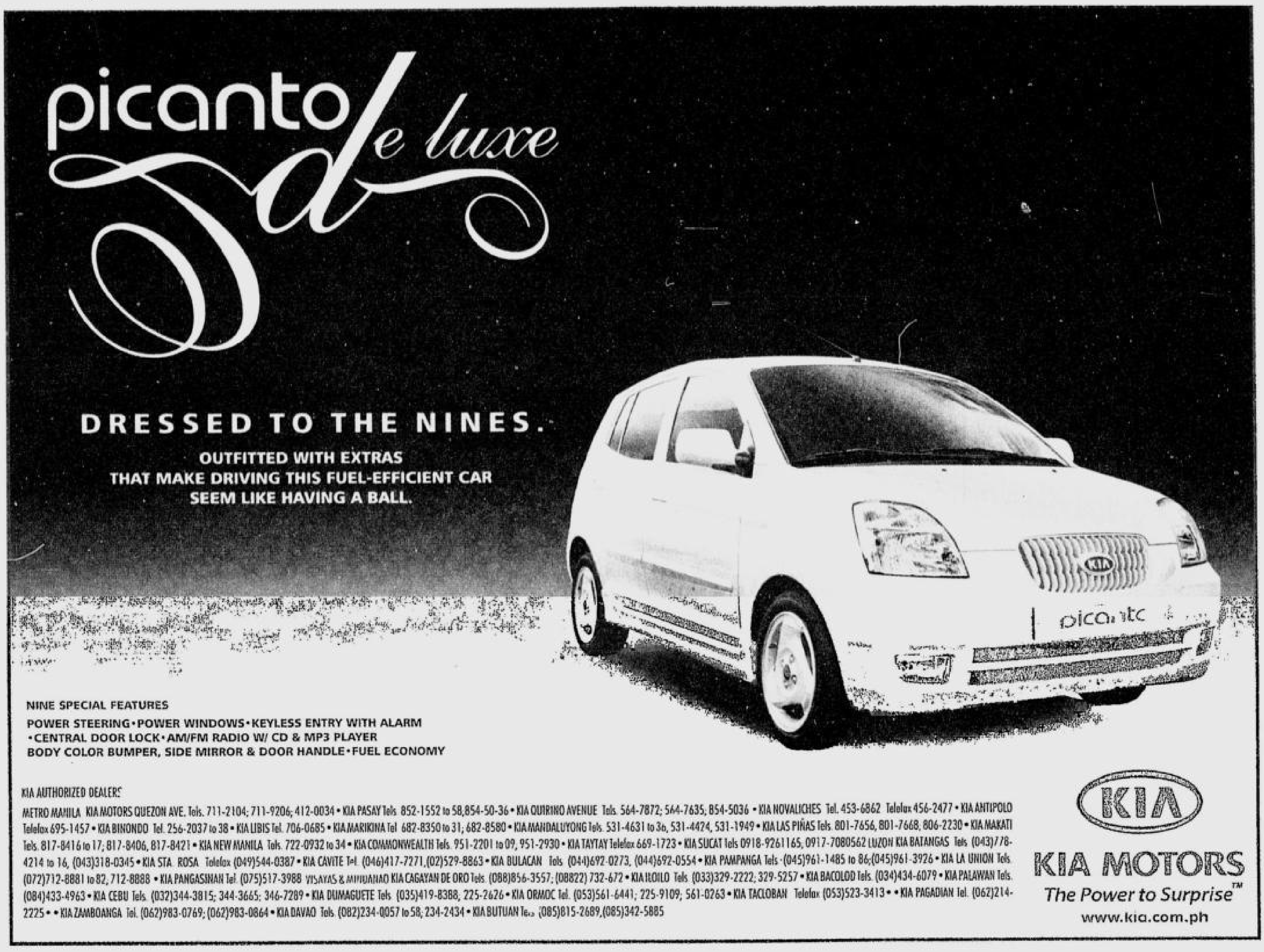
ROBERTO GOMEZ DOWNED COMPATRIOT Jharome Peña, 9-5, in the finals to rule the "The Battle of Scandinavia" 9-ball billiards tournament in Oslo, Norway, over the weekend.

The 27-year-old Gomez defeated Britain's Darren Appleton, 9-5, in the semifinal round to arrange the all-Filipino clash with the 24-year-old Peña, who had earlier knocked out another Briton, Raj Hundal, by the same score.

Gomez and Peña, two of the rising stars of Bugsy Promotion's pool of players, pocketed 3,000 euros (about P210,000) and 1,000 euros, respectively.

In the more lucrative 8-ball competition at the same venue, the Netherlands' Niels Feijen beat 17-year-old Ukrainian Artem Koshovyy in five best-of-five sets, 3-2, to claim the 15,000 euro champion's prize.

Marlon Bernardino, contributor



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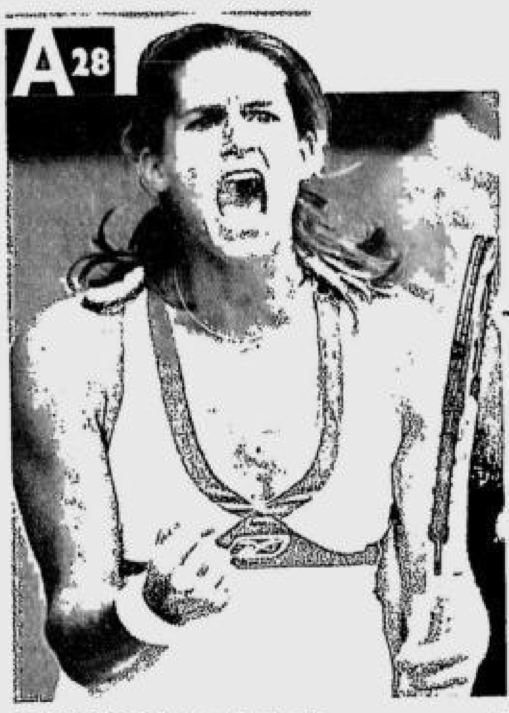

MAURESMO: Gets the boot AP

AUSTRALIAN OPEN

Amelie goes; Serena up

MELBOURNE, Australia—Defending champion Amelie Mauresmo and No. 3 Svetlana Kuznetsova dropped out in shocking upsets Sunday, clearing the way for Serena Williams to make an unlikely run to the Australian Open final.

Seven-time Grand Slam champion Williams, who missed most of last season with a knee injury, showed glimpses of her peak form in a 6-3, 6-2 win over 11th-seeded Jelena Jankovic.

"It was absolutely sensational. I just play some of my best tennis here," said Williams, who had 31 winners and dropped serve only once. "I'm on the right track—I like being a dangerous floatie."

Sixth-seeded Andy Roddick beat No. 9 Mario Ancic, 6-3, 3-6, 6-1, 5-7, 6-4, to set up a men's quarterfinal against old friend and housemate Mardy Fish.

"I felt like at end of fourth set he had the momentum and was really being offensive in the points," Roddick said. "I knew that in fifth set, win or lose, I had to turn the tables on the aggression. I was lucky to get through."

The second-seeded Mauresmo dropped a 6-4, 6-3 decision to 70th-ranked Lucie Safarova, and Kuznetsova fell 6-4, 6-2 to Shahar Peer of Israel in the women's fourth round.

Peer made the quarterfinals at a major for the first time and faces one of the best in the game. Williams covered the court with ease against Jankovic, despite question marks over her fitness. She won the last of her majors here in 2005.

ANDY Roddick, who earlier knocked out Marat Safin, bundles out lanky Mario Ancic in a battle of big servers at the Australian Open. AP

And Jankovic was in form, coming to Melbourne with a title at Auckland and a run to the final at last week's Sydney International.

The unseeded Fish also made the last eight for the first time at a Grand Slam, beating No. 16 David Ferrer 6-1, 7-6 (4), 2-6, 7-5. Fish lived with Roddick and his family for a year in 1999 and said the pair were like brothers.

In a post-match interview with former No. 1 Jim Courier, Roddick joked that Fish could repay the rent by losing the quarterfinal.

"I have a hard time thinking he's going to agree with it, but heck, I might as well propose it," Roddick said.

Mauresmo was up a service break early before slumping against Safarova, a 19-year-old Czech player who had only won one match in six previous Grand Slam tournaments.

"It's amazing. I still can't believe it," Safarova said. "I'm so happy. It's incredible."

It was Safarova's first time on center court at the Australian Open and her first match against Mauresmo.

"I came out this morning and said, 'Wow this is a big court.' But I felt really comfortable here," Safarova said.

She next plays fellow Czech Nicole Vaidisova, who beat seventh-seeded Elena Dementieva, 6-3, 6-3.

Safarova acknowledged her boyfriend—13th-seeded Tomas Berdych—who beat Dmitry Tursunov, 6-2, 6-1, 6-1, in a rain-delayed third-round match.

Mauresmo had her Grand Slam breakthrough last year in Melbourne, winning her first major title seven years after reaching her first final, also in the Australian Open. The 27-year-old Frenchwoman added the Wimbledon title and spent most of 2006 ranked No. 1.

In third-round matches delayed until Sunday by heavy rain, China's Li Na upset No. 9 Dinara Safina, 6-2, 6-2, 12th-seeded Anna Chakvetadze beat Jelena Kostanic Tosic, 6-4, 6-4, and No. 15 Daniela Hantuchova edged Ashley Harkleroad, 6-7 (6), 7-5, 6-3. *AP*

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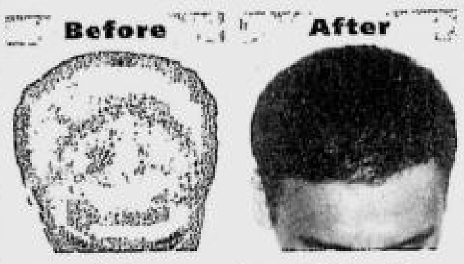

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DENVER'S JR Smith hangs on the rim after dunking the ball against the Houston Rockets in the second half. The Nuggets won, 121-113, in overtime. AP

Artest gets rude welcome in Detroit

DETROIT, MICHIGAN—RON ARTEST got a rude welcome on the court and from the fans Saturday upon his return to Detroit.

Artest was booed lustily by fans of the Detroit Pistons, who remember him from his tenure with the Indiana Pacers and the infamous 2004 brawl here when he waded into the stands to fight a fan he thought had hit him with a partially full plastic drink cup.

The Pistons treated Artest and his current teammates on the Sacramento Kings just as roughly in a 91-74 victory.

Artest was playing in Detroit for the first time since the Nov. 19, 2004 fracas, which ended in a full-scale riot that became a huge black eye for the NBA.

With a history of erratic behavior, Artest was suspended for the rest of the season, missing 75 games. Artest later faced criminal charges but was sentenced to probation and community service.

He was traded to the Kings last season and did not play in Detroit at all.

Artest interacted with the crowd once, making a motion like he was throwing a ball toward the fans.

"When I had to do my community service, a couple friends that I met when I came to Detroit said, 'When you come into the game we're going to play catch,'" Artest said. *AFP*

COMPLETE RESULTS: LA Clippers 112, Memphis 91; New York 108, Indiana 106; Charlotte 104, Atlanta 85; Detroit 91, Sacramento 74; Washington 115, Boston 110, OT; New Jersey 101, Orlando 94; New Orleans 113, LA Lakers 103; Utah 95, Chicago 85; Denver 121, Houston 113, OT; Cleveland 106, Golden State 104, OT

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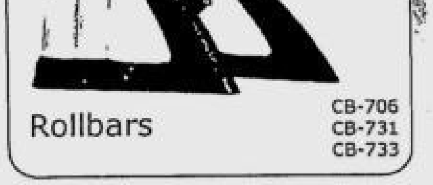

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Sportswriting finals set

THE PBA PRESS CORPS AND THE PBA MEDIA Bureau stake a total of P35,000 for its sportswriting contest national finals set Feb. 7. The contest is open to college students who have never won the same writing competition the previous years. Registration may be made through Hazel Ancheta at 6381815 to 17. Darren Neil Cabrera of La Union, Rachel Anne Capapas of Dumaguete and Aristotle Intila of Gen. Santos City made the final by topping regional eliminations. Backed by the PBA Media Bureau under its chief Willie Marcial, the PBAPC writing contest was spread to Luzon, Visayas and Mindanao for the first time. The winner receives P20,000, second placer P10,000 and third placer P5,000.

Coach E clinic slated

NEW MODULES WILL BE OFFERED TO SECOND year students as the Coach E Basketball School opens classes at San Beda College-Alabang on Jan. 23. Interested students can register at 6311195 or 0921-7562639 during office hours from Mondays to Fridays or log-on to iba_phil@yahoo.com and www.ibaphil.net. For Xavier classes, call 7230481. Late enrollees can still join classes at The Zone in Makati every Wednesday (5-7 p.m.) and Saturday (8-10 a.m.); clubsixfifty in Libis every Friday (5-7 p.m.) and Saturday (10-12 p.m.) and; San Beda College-Alabang every Tuesday (5:30 p.m. to 7:30 p.m.) and Saturday (10-12 p.m.).

SPORTSWATCH

Xavier Matchplay today

THE ALUMNI ASSOCIATION OF XAVIER SCHOOL will stage the sixth edition of the GMA 7-Xavier Matchplay today and on Jan. 29 at the Sta. Elena Golf Club. This fund-raising tourney by the Batch 1975 of Xavier School is for the benefit of the Xavier School Educational Trust Fund, according to tournament chair Greg T. Yu. Six teams—Stallions skippered by Lawrence Cobankiat, Tiger (Dennis Huang), Ck (Ruben Tan), Dragons (Robbie Anonas), Colt 45 (Bobby Go) and Batch 90 (Baldwin Cheung)—are vying for the overall crown.

Top cockers clash at SJC

THE HEAVYWEIGHTS OF INTERNATIONAL COCKfighting figure in interesting matchups in the SJC 8-Cock International Derby which gets under way at 10 a.m. today at the San Juan Coliseum. A tough cast of 130 participants will see action in the two-cock elimination round. The Super Pacman I and II of boxing hero Manny Pacquiao, Wakee Salud and Gov. Chavit Singson go up against defending champion Pol Estrellado's PE San Pablo. Pacquiao, winner of an international derby in Parañaque last year, will field the fighters he bought from Fresno, California, two years ago. Also expected to draw attention is the one-on-one duel between Patrick Antonio and the tandem of Sonny Lagon and Bruce Barnette of Alabama.

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Gov't eyes T-bond offering for OFWs

Wants to raise $1.3B for infra projects

By Doris C. Dumlao

THE GOVERNMENT PLANS TO SELL AN EXCLUSIVE batch of retail treasury bonds (RTBs) to overseas Filipino workers within the year and use the proceeds to shore up its infrastructure spending.

In an infrastructure forum held by First Metro Investment Corp. and the University of Asia & the Pacific on Friday, Bangko Sentral ng Pilipinas Deputy Governor Diwa Guinigundo said the government was now drafting the mechanics of the proposed RTB issuance targeting OFWs and their families.

"It's being discussed by the Bureau of Internal Revenue in the context of infrastructure spending and financing," Guinigundo said.

"It can be (denominated in) pesos, dollars or euros depending on the demand from our OFWs," he said.

The Philippines needs to spend at least P1.7 trillion or 4.5 percent of its gross domestic product from 2006 to

GOV'T/ B2

IN THIS ISSUE

- **Ford set to sell more** cars that run on biofuels /B4
- **Committed investments** in 2006 hit P274B /B12

Politicking still worries businessmen

By Daxim L. Lucas

BUSINESSMEN REMAIN WORRIED OVER the negative influence that politics may have on the economy despite the government's impressive gains last year on the fiscal front.

At the same time, however, Makati Business Club (MBC) president Ramon R. del Rosario Jr. warned that the business community should not ignore the need for greater reform in governance just because of recent positive developments.

"When things seem to be looking good, such as we have now, with the economy posting sustained growth and the financial markets trading with a very bullish tone, there is a tendency for people to brush aside issues of governance and accountability for fear of unsettling the situation and derailing the economy's and financial markets' positive momentum," he said.

Del Rosario made his comments in a forum on the country's 2007 prospects hosted by the Foreign Correspondents Association of the Philippines (Focap) in Makati City last Friday.

"The stereotypical businessman, in particular, is viewed to be very reluctant to become proactively involved in demanding political accountability and good governance, particularly when business is doing well," he added.

However, he stressed that the MBC takes a longer-term view on the "close interrelationship" between good governance and political accountability with the country's sustained economic progress.

POLITICKING/ B5

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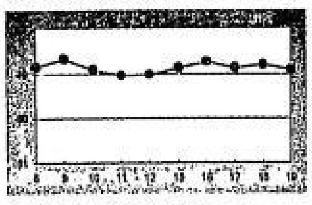

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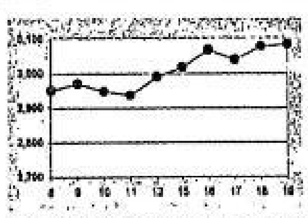
STOCK MARKET



(See stock market report on Page B2)

Stock index seen testing 3,100 mark

STOCK MARKET INVESTORS WILL KEEP A close eye on the Bangko Sentral ng Pilipinas this week as its policy-making Monetary Board meets on Thursday to decide on the direction of local interest rates.

According to a research note published by AB Capital Securities, all indications point toward the monetary authority keeping its overnight rates steady.

"It appears that the BSP will stay put and let rates remain unchanged to the meantime," the online broker said.

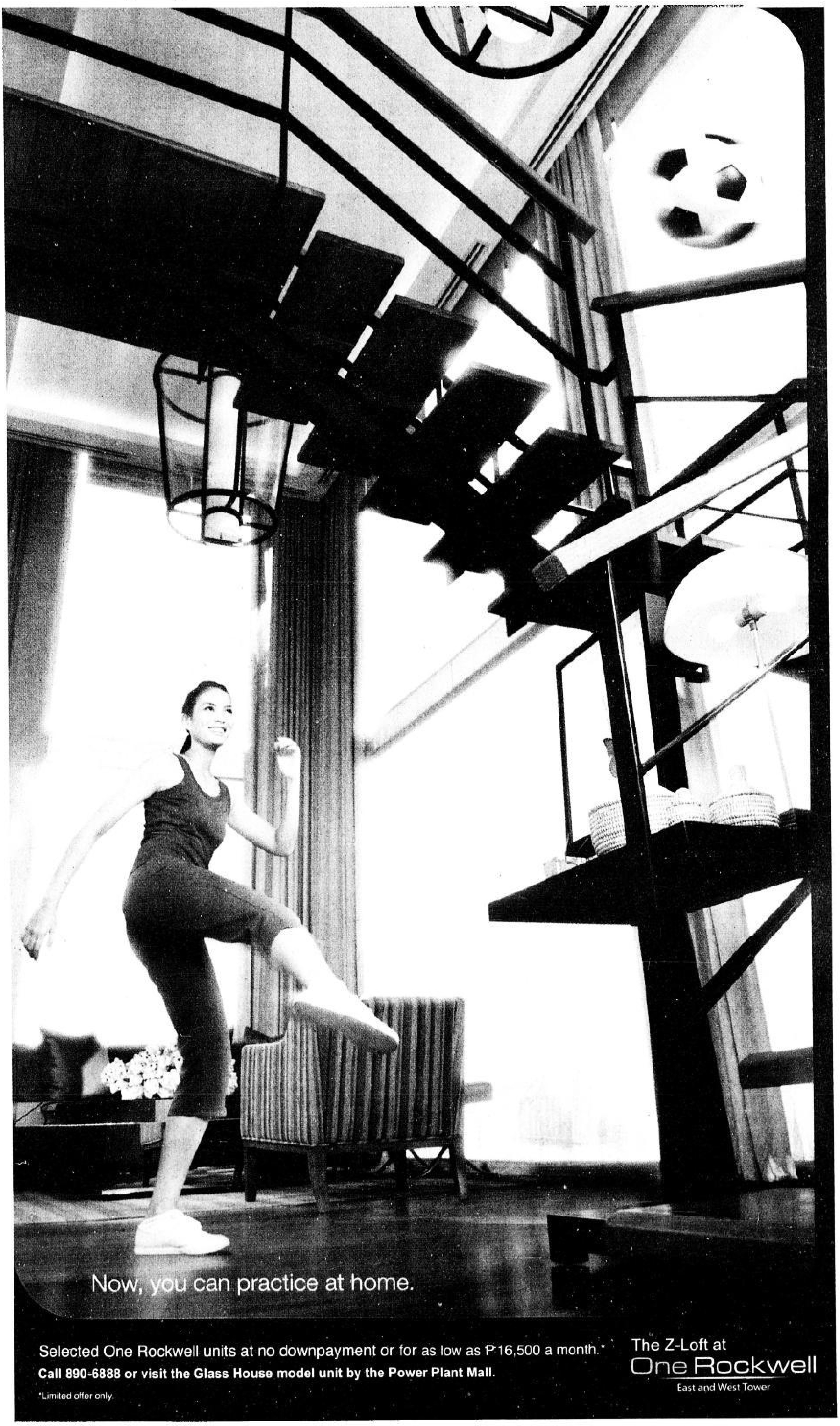
The prevailing low interest rate regime—with treasury bill rates at an all-time low—have been partly credited for the strong run-up of stock prices in recent weeks.

Last Friday, the Philippine Stock Exchange index (PSEi) closed at a 10-year high of 3,085.18 from the previous week's close of 2,992.33, representing a 3.1-percent weekly rise.

Volume was heavy throughout the week with an average of P3.7 billion changing hands daily, representing a 43-percent jump form the previous week's average of only P2.5 billion a day.

AB Capital said that although lower interest rates were warranted, concerns about potential inflationary pressures may stay the hand of the central bank for now.

STOCK/ B2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A misunderstood agency

No Free Lunch

Cielito F. Habito

STRANGERS WHO RECOGNIZE ME FROM my past incarnation as a government official often think I was the secretary of DENR, not Neda, probably because the acronyms sound similar. In spite of its critical role in the government, not very many Filipinos are aware of the National Economic and Development Authority (Neda).

Even fewer people understand what Neda's role in the government is. Even Congress erroneously misclassified it as a "front-line agency" in a survey taken among its members in the 1990s. Not surprisingly, Neda landed near the bottom in terms of client satisfaction. The Neda director general has a job that makes it virtually impossible to be popular among Cabinet peers, the politicians in Congress, local government officials, the donor community, the business sector, the NGOs, and yes, the president himself/herself.

In fact, I used to say that if you are Neda director general and manage to be popular with any or all of these groups, chances are you're not doing your job well. Being the head of an "oversight" agency, more so the development planning agency, it is the job of the secretary of socioeconomic planning—the Cabinet title of the Neda DG—to poke his nose into everybody else's business.

Playing God

As overall coordinator for crafting the six-year Medium Term Philippine Development Plan, it becomes incumbent on Neda to see to it that the various parts of the government do their part to ensure its faithful implementation. Thus, it constantly needs to ask other departments and agencies to provide information and data on how well they're doing their job, something they absolutely hate to do. Always needing to look at the big picture, Neda often has to remind sectoral departments and agencies that theirs is not necessarily the highest priority sector in the scheme of things. The problem is, practically all of them like to believe that this is the case, and resent it when they see Neda to be "playing God." But then, someone has to play this thankless role if the government is to move as a team, instead of pulling in different directions. There has to be an effective team captain, more so when the presidency falls short in this critical task.

With its coordinative role, Neda is either chair or member of more than 400 inter-agency bodies, spanning the range from national policy-making bodies like the Monetary Board to minute coordinative entities like the Inter-agency Committee on the Iwahig Penal Colony. With so many committee and council meetings to attend or chair, the Neda DG spends the bulk of his office hours in endless meetings. The rest are spent delivering speeches on every topic under the sun, because being the overall development expert in the Cabinet, he is expected to speak with authority on anything ranging from fiscal and monetary policy to the role of butterfly culture in national development.

Too many questions

It's especially hard for Neda to be popular among government colleagues, politicians and private sector project proponents when it is constantly seen as standing in the way of getting their pet projects approved and funded by the donors. As head of the technical secretariat of the inter-agency Investment Coordination Committee (ICC) of the Neda Board, its job is to ensure that due diligence is conducted in evaluating the worthiness of all development projects vying for foreign assistance. And due diligence takes time, and even more so when the project proponents in the various government departments and agencies are reluctant, if not outright unwilling to provide the necessary information needed to do it. There can be various reasons for this, ranging from not having done the proper homework, to having something to hide about the true worth of the project and about its real beneficiaries. Neda is despised for "asking too many questions," "playing God," or causing "paralysis through analysis."

Accountable to all

As secretary of socioeconomic planning, the Neda DG is the only Cabinet member with no specific constituency. The same applies to the Neda regional directors in their respective regions. Where the DTI secretary has traders and industrialists, the agriculture secretary has farmers and agribusiness people, and the BSP governor has bankers for primary constituents, he has the entire Filipino citizenry to serve in equal measure. He must reconcile divergent interests and positions, and seek compromises. That's why training in economics—the science of tradeoffs—is crucial to the job. Thus, he can never make everybody happy all of the time. At one time or another, he will make a particular group unhappy. And because people have long memories for what you do wrong and short memories for what you do right, he unwittingly makes new enemies practically every day he spends on the job.

He occasionally has to issue unflattering reports on the economy, provided by the statistical agencies under his administrative supervision, and then gets the flak even if he's merely the bearer of the bad news.

I commiserate with Secretary Romy Neri. He has a most unenviable job. And the same goes for the hundreds of hardworking men and women at Neda that he leads.

(Comments are welcome at chabito@ateneo.edu)

Gov't eyes T-bond . . .

From page B1

2010 to fund the infrastructure requirements of the economy, Agriculture Secretary and infrastructure monitoring task force chair Arthur Yap noted during the same forum.

Based on BSP estimates, remittances from OFWs—whether coursed through banks or other channels—could hit a new high of $13 billion this year.

Assuming a 10-percent savings rate among beneficiaries of OFW remittances, Guinigundo said there would still be some $1.3 billion that could be tapped for government infrastructure financing.

Based on the BSP's earlier surveys among OFW households in Metro Manila, about 95 percent or nearly all of the households used part of the remittances to buy food and pay for other domestic expenditures.

Only 11 percent of these households attempt to invest in stocks or any private business but a larger 39 percent keep savings in banks and other depository institutions.

Guinigundo said the government has yet to finalize how much RTBs to issue but that Finance Secretary Margarito Teves was very supportive of the proposed OFW offering.

Guinigundo said there would be a system of accreditation on investors eligible for the new RTB offering since it would cater exclusively to OFWs and their families.

He said the government was aware of the significant impact of OFW remittances on the economy as these inflows were now equivalent to about 10 percent of the country's gross domestic product and 60 percent of the BSP's foreign exchange reserves.

Through the years, OFW remittances have thus made the Philippine economy more resilient to shocks that could otherwise affect economic growth, inflation, external accounts and employment. In terms of employment, for instance, the ratio of jobless Filipinos would have doubled to 20 percent from the current 10 percent if all OFWs had remained in the country instead.

Stock . . .

From page B1

"While inflation has remained tame, concerns of price pressures from the upcoming election in May have solicited mixed reviews for the CPI (consumer price index) outlook in 2007," the report added.

The overnight rate is used as a basis by banks for pricing their commercial loans and therefore has a broad effect on the overall liquidity of the local financial system. .

Apart from local interest rates, stock market watchers are also looking at developments on the foreign exchange market. *Daxim L. Lucas*

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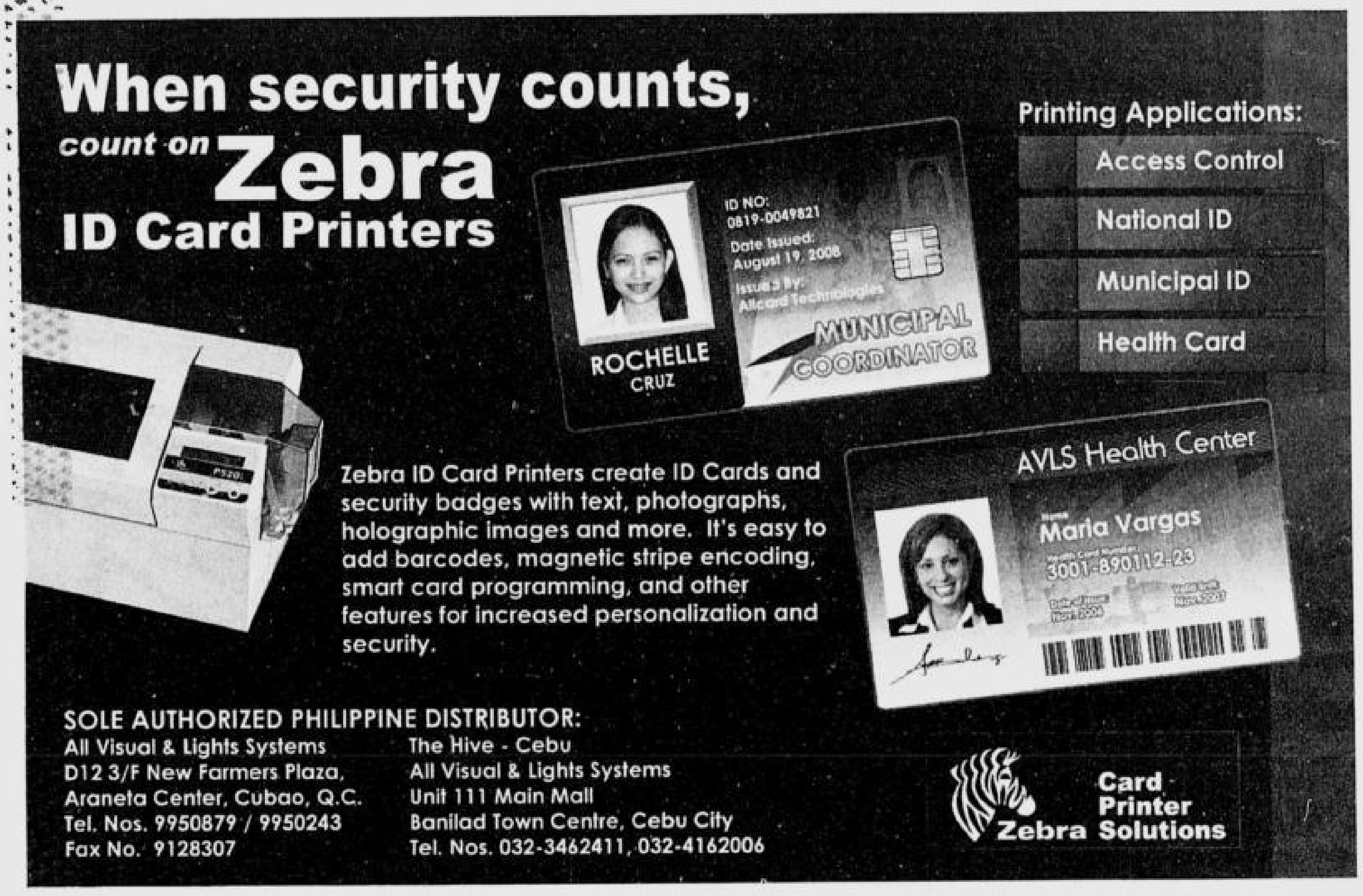

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French bank sees continued peso rally

By Doris C. Dumlao

FRENCH BANKING GIANT BNP PARIBAS IS bullish on the peso given the country's rosier economic fundamentals, projecting the local currency to rally further toward the 45 level against the dollar by the second half of 2008.

Speaking before an infrastructure forum held by First Metro Investment Corp. and the University of Asia & the Pacific on Friday, BNP Paribas chief economist and head of credit research for the Asia-Pacific Andrew Freris said they were expecting a "re-rating"—likely a sovereign credit rating upgrade from Standard & Poor's—after the May elections.

The Hong Kong-based economist had also forecast growth in local gross domestic product to pick up to 6 this year and 6.5 percent next year while inflation rate was seen easing to 4.5 percent this year and 3.5 percent in 2008.

He said the peso would continue to appreciate against the dollar as foreign inflows were improving alongside the country's external trade balance.

BNP Paribas also sees the peso hovering within the 48 levels within the first half of this year then breaking into the 47 level after the May elections. The local currency was projected to hit 47.50 by the third quarter and further rise to 47 to the dollar by the last quarter of this year.

By the first quarter of 2008, Freris projected that the peso would gain further against the dollar to hit 46.50 in the first quarter, 46 in the second quarter, 45.50 by the third quarter and 45 to a dollar by the fourth quarter.

"The external balances will support it. Inflation is flattening out, GDP growth is going to be basically okay and the re-ratings coming from a substantial improvement in fiscal position will spell another cut in interest rates," Freris said.

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Ford set to sell more cars that run on biofuels

By Abigail L. Ho

AFTER THE SUCCESSFUL INTRODUCTION of its flexi-fuel vehicles last year, Ford Group Philippines plans to eventually venture into the manufacture of vehicles that use other types of alternative fuels.

"Over the next few years, we'll manufacture other vehicles that use other alternative fuels. Right now, 20 percent of our total output is flexi-fuel vehicles.

We'll increase that to include other forms of alternative fuel technology," Ford Philippines president Henry Co said in a briefing.

He said flexi-fuel vehicles, however, would remain the "mainstays because we believe that's the most appropriate for the Philippines."

Apart from the Philippines, he said Ford also exported its flexi-fuel vehicles to Indonesia, Thailand and Malaysia. Completely knocked down units were also being shipped to Vietnam.

"But we hope to go beyond the (Association of Southeast Asian Nations) market over time," he said.

Flexi-fuel vehicles have single tanks, fuel systems and engines, but are designed to run on both unleaded gasoline and an alcohol-based fuel, usually ethanol.

American firm Ford Motor Co. created flexi-fuel technology in the mid-1980s.

Ford, General Motors and DaimlerChrysler all have flexi-fuel vehicles.

Ford last year invested $20 million in a factory that produces flexi-fuel vehicles in the Philippines, its first such facility in Asia.

Co said Ford was "happy" with the sales of its flexi-fuel vehicles, "but we could do better."

The recent signing of the Biofuels Act of 2006 should help, he said, although the public still needed to be educated on the benefits of biofuels.

"We have to educate people on biofuel use. It's good for the country, the environment, agriculture and energy security," he said.

Under the Biofuels Act, all diesel-fed vehicles should use a minimum 1-percent biodiesel blend within three months from the effectivity of the law.

Gasoline, on the other hand, should have at least a 5-percent ethanol blend within two years of the law's effectivity.

The mandated blend will rise to 2 percent for biodiesel after two years, and to at least 10 percent for bio-ethanol after four years.

Co said Ford's current flexi-fuel vehicles, the Ford Focus 1.8 and 2.0, could run on as much as a 20-percent ethanol blend.

GMO rice still in RP, says Greenpeace

By Christine A. Gaylican

GREENPEACE PHILIPPINES HAS REVEALED that imported genetically modified rice was still being sold in supermarkets, two months after the group made public its discovery.

The Department of Agriculture has not done anything to confiscate the GE-tainted rice that are not allowed to be sold in supermarkets, the environmental activist group said.

Greenpeace said the Uncle Sam Texas Long Grain Rice "has tested positive for GMO contamination."

"The DA is fully aware of the US rice contamination scandal that affected global rice markets last year. But aside from merely issuing a statement that they will be checking future rice imports for GE contamination, they have not taken any steps to prevent the continued sale of this illicit product in the market," Greenpeace campaigner

Daniel Ocampo pointed out.

In November, Greenpeace reported that the brand "Uncle Sam Texas Long Grain Rice," distributed by Purefeeds Corp. of Sta. Cruz, Manila, was tested last year by an independent laboratory and was found positive for Bayer LL601.

Bayer's LL601 is rice genetically altered to survive the powerful herbicide glufosinate.

Greenpeace said it was field-tested under permits granted by the USDA (Department of Agriculture) from 1998 to 2001 but development was stopped by Bayer in 2001 for unclear reasons.

On July 31, 2006, Bayer informed the USDA of LL601 contamination in the food chain, but neither Bayer nor the USDA was able to tell how much rice was contaminated, which rice products were involved, or where the contaminated rice ended up.

Bayer LL601 is illegal (not approved for commercial distribution or human consumption) in any place in the world except in the United States where the company applied for marketing approval only after it illegally contaminated the food chain, presumably to limit its legal liability for the episode, Ocampo said.

The widespread Bayer LL601 contamination scandal was the most significant demonstration of GE rejection on a global scale last year.

The incident also prompted rice producers and exporters in the US, EU and Asia to commit to GMO-free production and trade.

Bacolod eyes new call centers

By Carla P. Gomez
Inquirer Visayas

BACOLOD CITY— THE LOCAL GOVERNMENT here is banking on the entry of more call centers to boost the city's economy.

Bacolod Mayor Evelio Leonardia said during the inauguration of Teleperformance, a call center company based in the United States, that the city government would continue to provide a business climate that would allow Teleperformance and other call centers to grow.

Teleperformance managing director Dave Rizzo said the Bacolod call center has 300 employees.

"And, in 2008, we would love nothing more than to be able to hire 500 more employees," he said.

The Bacolod Teleperformace call center currently services three firms, Rizzo said.

One operates some of the largest entertain-

BACOLOD/ B5

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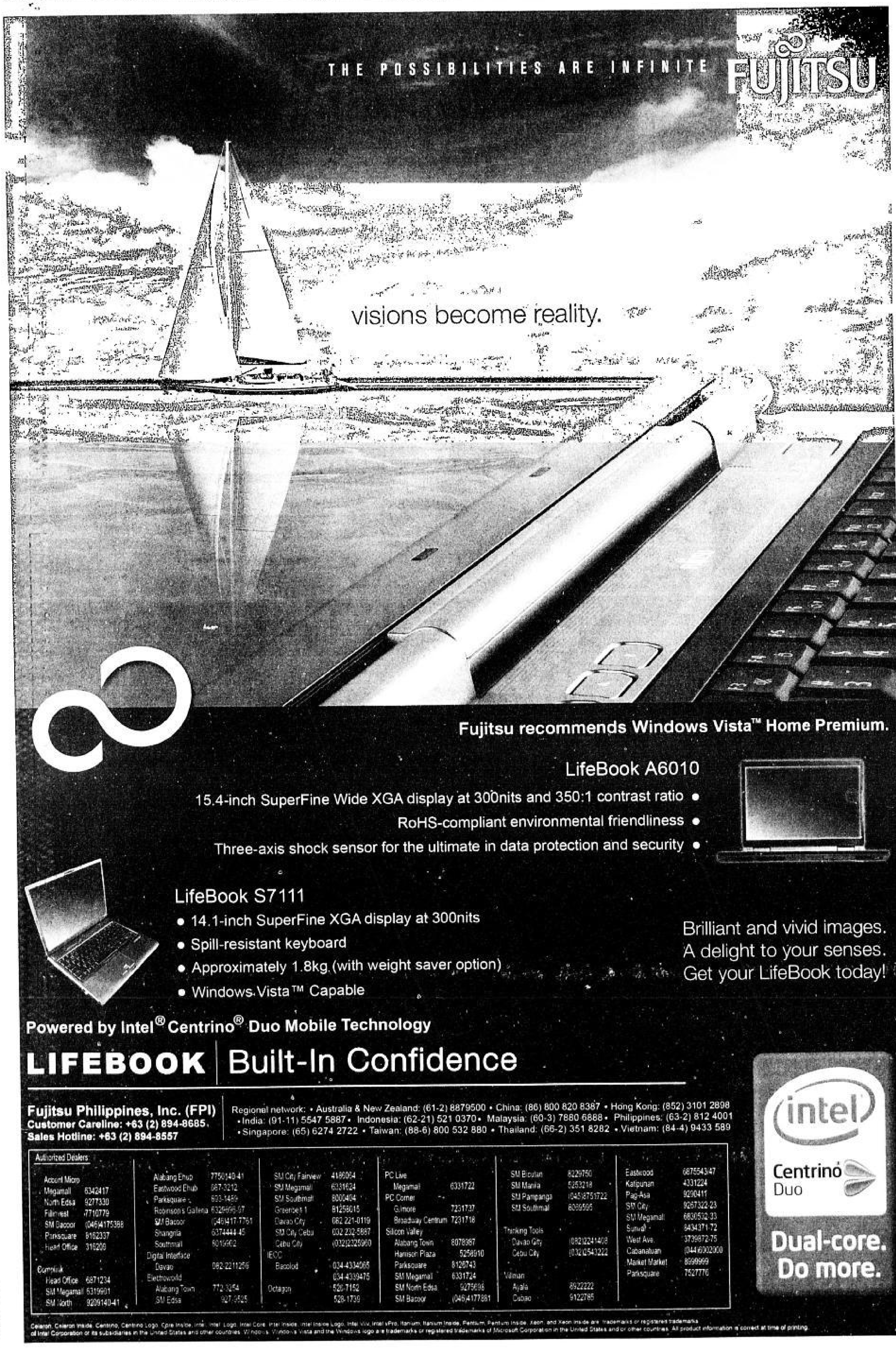
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Getting elected now too expensive

CORRUPTION IS ROOTED ON THIS SIMPLE fact: Getting elected in this country has become too, too expensive.

I know someone who ran for a seat in the House of Representatives in 2003.

He spent a whopping P30 million—and lost. The winner probably spent P60 million.

For this May's elections, the tab has probably gone up a few notches.

Even in the less affluent districts, a candidate for the House has to have a campaign budget of at least P2 million a town.

Big budget

If the district has 10 towns, his total budget has to be P20 million, in order to have a fighting chance.

He should hope that his opponent does not have deeper pockets.

Chavit Singson wants to run for the Senate. How much does he need to mount a nationwide campaign?

If this were a presidential year, he can save some money by hitching rides with the presidential candidate.

Since this is a mid-term election, Chavit is on his own. My guess is he needs a campaign budget of at least P60 million.

Even candidates for party list representatives need a large budget.

The party list system was introduced to allow the marginalized and disadvantaged sectors—such as farmers, retirees and veterans—to be represented in Congress.

Good return

But to win the maximum three seats a party requires a budget of as much as P20 million. As a result, communist front organizations, such as Bayan Muna and Anak Pawis, heavily funded by the revolutionary taxes extorted by the National People's Army (NPA) from the poorest, far-flung barrios, dominate the party list ranks.

The question is: Why? The reason is simple: Pork barrel.

The lawmaker takes a cut, at least 20 percent, of every public works project in his district funded by pork barrel.

If he is a party bigwig, he can get a bigger pork barrel than the rank and file lawmaker.

Running for a post in a local government has also become too expensive.

To run for mayor of Manila, the candidate will need at least P100 million.

In cities like Quezon City, Makati, Cebu and Davao, the budget is probably only slightly less.

A hundred million pesos is probably needed to run for governor in a major province like Pangasinan, Pampanga, or Cebu.

At the bottom of the scale are mini-provinces like Batanes, Biliran Camiguin and Catanduanes.

QUESTIONS OF POLICIES

Honesto C. General

Even running for councilor has become too expensive.

I know someone who ran for councilor in a small town in the Visayas. He spent P500,000, all the money he could scrape up. He never had a chance.

Good investment

The investment game in the local governments is different.

The hefty returns come, not from public works projects, but from illegal activities such as jueteng, smuggling and money laundering.

In sum, politics is an extremely good investment.

Oh, okay, it is a dirty and corrupt investment, but, if the investor has the stomach for it, you have to admit the returns are most satisfying.

The tragedy, of course, is that, in the end, the taxpayer pays for all that graft and corruption.

And, unless, a way is found to cut election spending, let us forget about cleaning up. *(Next week, let us discuss how we can cut election spending.)*

Politicking still worries . . .

From page B1

"We believe that, in the long run, sustained economic development that allows us to create successful and stronger business enterprises and to liberate more Filipinos from poverty can be achieved only if we set a strong foundation for good governance that enables and supports the implementation of both enlightened policies and meaningful and effective programs and projects," Del Rosario said.

The MBC is the umbrella organization of the country's biggest companies and has been critical of many of the Arroyo administration's policies since 2004.

Del Rosario warned that the business community along with the rest of the country continued to suffer under inconsistent policy-making by the government as evidenced by several "flip-flops" on several key issues.

"We are deeply bothered by the observation that the current administration seems to have become very comfortable with the idea of simply barreling through with their political initiatives and measures with very little regard to constitutional, legal and moral constraints," he said.

Bacolod ...

From page B4

ment parks in the world; one is a popular cellular phone manufacturer and the third is one of the world's largest computer manufacturers.

The company had no difficulty finding employees in Bacolod City, Rizzo said.

Four call centers set up shop in Bacolod City last year, according to Councilor Jocelle Batapa-Sique, chairperson of the Bacolod IT Focus Team.

Aside from Teleperformance, the others are Teletech, with more than 900 employees, Focus Communications and IO Asia, with more than 100 workers each.

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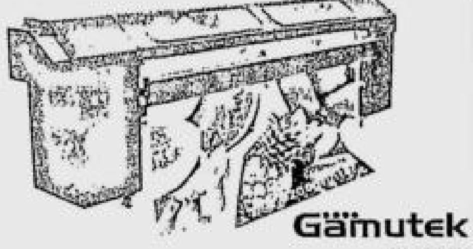

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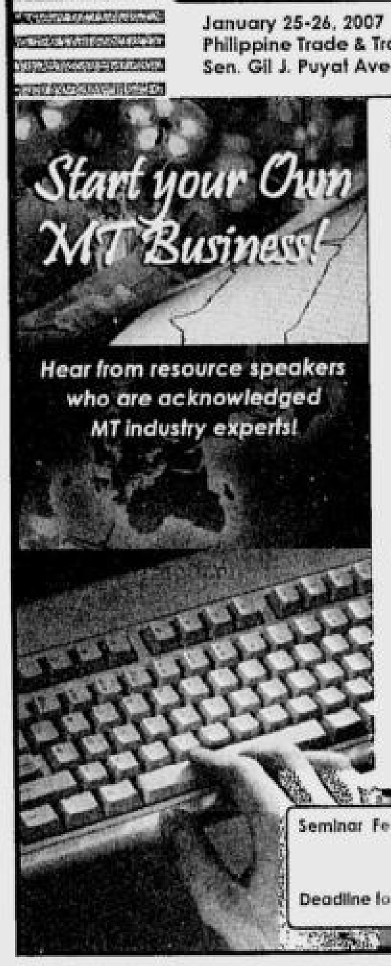

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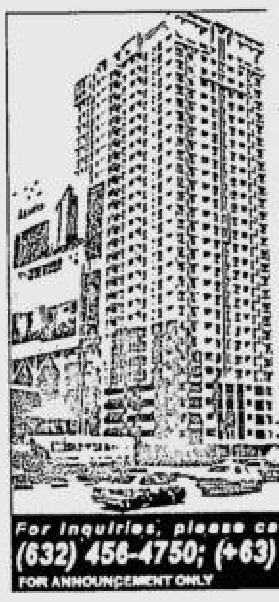

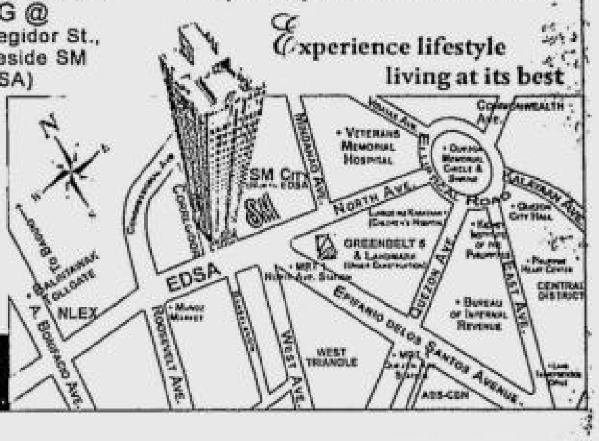

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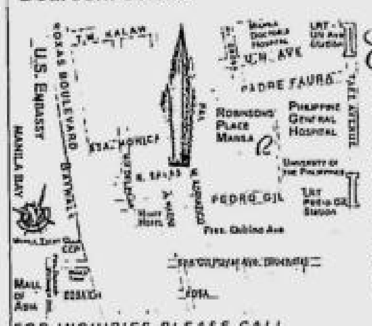

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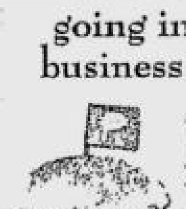

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CONGRESS STAGE

FEBRUARY 8, 2007 (Day 1)
12:00NN Spanish Specialty Cuisine by Chef Miguel Alba, Alba's Restaurant; Children's Party Menus by Chef Mike Crisologo, Enchanted Kingdom; Popular Cafe Menus by JL Martinez, Green Tomato
3:00PM How to Operate and Manage your Catering Business

FEBRUARY 9, 2007 (Day 2)
10:00AM Entering into Bartending Career & Business
12:00NN Dessert Academy: "Latest Trends in Pastry Design"
2:00PM European Cuisine
4:00PM Learning the Business of Donut Making

FEBRUARY 10, 2007 (Day 3)
10:00AM Banquet Event Order In The Perspective Of Banquet Operations By Center For Hospitality Arts & Management Of The Phils. (Champ)
1:00PM SSP COURSES (SOUP SALAD PASTA) BY International School For Culinary Arts And Hotel Management (ISCAHM)
4:00PM Home Based Business Designed For Students By Ultima Entrepinoy Forum Center

CULINARY COMPETITIONS

TEAM EVENTS
T01 Intimate Table Setting For 2 (Valentines Theme)
T02 12 Eggs
T03 Catering Olympics
T04 Go Cart - Market Basket Competition On Wheels
T05 Baking Bread

INDIVIDUAL EVENTS
I01 Culinary Talent Fair: Search For Celebrity Chefs
I02 Salad Dressing Flairtending
I03 Kitchen Dash
I04 Valentines Cake (Freestyle-Display)

All Schedules Subject To Change Without Prior Notice!

SEMINAR ROOM (A, B & C)

FEBRUARY 8, 2007 (Day 1)
12:00NN Role of DTI in SME Development by DTI-PTTC (P300) - Room A
12:00NN Food Safety & Hygiene Awareness by Mantok, A Division of NCH - Room B
1:00PM Running a Meat Shop Business in your Homes by TLRC (P500) - Room A
2:00PM How to Start your Business with P5,000 Capital, Meet the GURU of Meat Processing in the Philippines By Lulu Rivera of Ultima Entrepinoy Forum Center (P500) - Room B
5:00PM How to Start an Electronic E-Loading Business by E-Negosyo - Room A

FEBRUARY 9, 2007 (Day 2)
10:00AM 7-Pi Formula for Successful Foodcart & Start Up Operations by Mark So, Business Maker Academy (P2 500) - A
10:00AM Chocolate Making & Molding by Golden Treasure Skills Development Program (P600) - Room B
1:00PM How to Start Your Business By Philippine Franchise Association (with FEE) - Tel. 6383149 - Room C

FEBRUARY 10, 2007 (Day 3)
10:00AM How to Start & Manage a Catering Business by Ultima Entrepinoy Forum Center (P500) - Room A
10:00AM Going Into the Dairy Business by National Dairy Authority (P400) - Room B
2:00PM Make your PRODUCTS Stand Out from the Shelves (The Right Packaging Labeling for your Food Products) (P500) - Room A
1:00PM How to Franchise Your Business By Philippine Franchise Association (with FEE) - Tel. 6383149 - Room C
3:00PM Perfection: World's Hospitality Choice by Universal Weavers Corporation (FREE) - Room B
3:00PM Wine Appreciation - With Application of Wine to Food, Beverage Costing, and Packaging for Gifts by Asia's In Good Taste Magazine (P500) - Room B
5:00PM Business that Fits your Budget by JC Fran Corporation - Room A

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Condominium living is different from owning or renting a single dwelling, town house or apartment, because condos have a dual nature. Condominium owners hold title to their units and share responsibility for the operating costs of the balance of the property like common elements such as lobbies that makes up the condominium.

But condominiums are not everyone's cup of tea. Condominium corporations may set restrictions on such things as owning pets, or having an outdoor barbeque. Before you jump into the condo market with both feet, you should make sure that the condominium lifestyle is right for you.

Consider, though, the many advantages to condominium ownership. It may be less expensive than other types of home ownership. It can provide an "instant" sense of community. While someone else is clearing the neighborhood canal, you can participate in community decision-making.

With bad traffic, fare and parking fee hikes, the need to be in proximity to your work and other places of interest is at its peak. Imagine the convenience of stepping down from your home to your office in less than the time it takes to get a cab. If you plan to be in the heart of the city where land is at premium, a condominium may be your best choice.

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An equally laudable project is the EDSA Grand Residences by EDSA Grand Realty Development Corporation. A 26-unit tower along EDSA cor Corregidor St., it is steps away from SM City North EDSA, MRT Station and other points of interest in Quezon City. Prepare to be impressed by its exceptional details that add classiness to urban living.

Indeed, considering one's needs and lifestyle, may it be practicality or sophistication, determines whether condo living is truly your cup of tea.

To view comprehensive unit plans and other details, please visit www.adriaticogrand.com and www.edsagrand.com)

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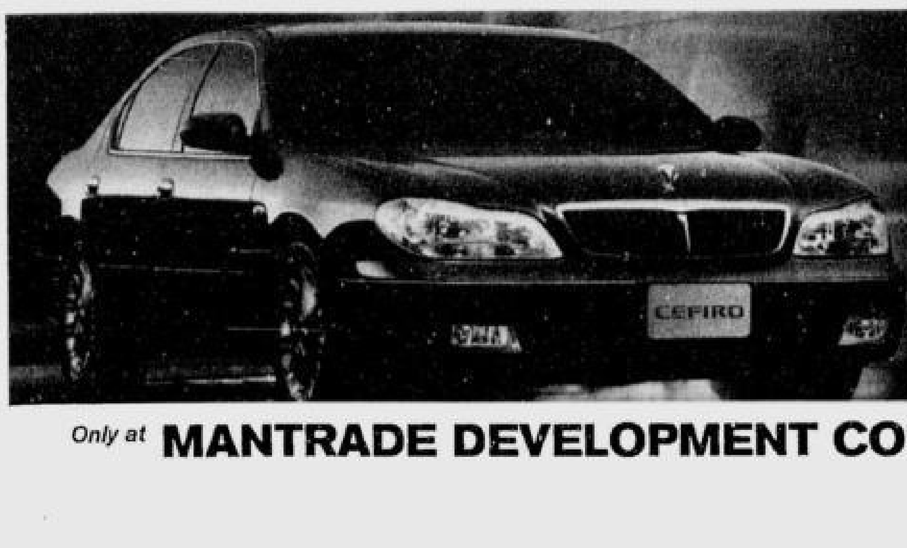

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NISSAN

MPIC partners with Israeli firm for Subic-Clark-Tarlac highway bid

Awarding set on March 21

By Daxim L. Lucas

PUBLICLY-LISTED METRO PACIFIC INVESTMENTS Corp. (MPIC) has enlisted the help of an Israeli firm experienced in toll road operations in its bid to operate and maintain the Subic-Clark-Tarlac expressway.

Speaking to reporters on Friday, MPIC president and CEO Jose Ma. Lim said they have entered into a joint venture partnership with the Africa Israel Investments Philippines Inc. to boost its chances of winning the project.

"We're partnering with Africa Israel because they have a subsidiary that operates toll roads in Israel," he said, adding that the partnership would involve a 60-40 equity sharing scheme in favor of MPIC.

Lim said MPIC, a unit of the Hong Kong-based First Pacific Co. Ltd., has already expressed its interest in the project to the Bases Conversion Development Authority.

"We're now ready to submit our prequalification package," he added.

So far, 12 companies have submitted letters of intent to bid on a 10-year contract to operate and maintain the P21-billion Subic-Clark-Tarlac expressway, according to the BCDA.

Apart from MPIC, the list included the Ayala group's Ayala Property Management Corp., the Lopez group's First Philippine Holdings Corp., Mideast Alliance Resources Corp., SNC Lavalin International, Ausphil Tollways Corp., Pacific Concrete Products, UEM-Mara Philippines Corp., R.D. Policarpio Co., STAR Infrastructure Development Corp., J.V. Angeles Construction Corp., and Pietras Builders Inc..

The contract will be awarded on March 21.

Intended for completion by the end of this year, the 93.77-kilometer toll way is a flagship project envisioned to transform the central and northern Luzon regions into a "super region" of economic growth.

It will cut travel time between the Subic Bay Freeport northwest of Manila and the Clark Special Economic Zone north of Manila to 30 minutes, and between Clark and the Hacienda Luisita industrial estate in northern Tarlac province to 20 minutes. At present, travel between these points takes as long as two hours.

BCDA president Narciso Abaya earlier said that the contract would cover toll collection and traffic management, roadway maintenance, general administration, and greening and landscaping.

The BCDA has set a ceiling of 12.2 percent for the bidders' proposed share in toll collections.

Meanwhile, the MPIC chief said his firm was also interesting in the project to extend the Skyway elevated road system if the deal could be "structured to make it more feasible."

"Right now, the toll [rates] are so high, and the debt [levels of the firm] are also very high," he said, adding that MPIC would want to see the toll concession extended over a longer distance southward for the project to be able to take advantages of economies of scale.

SM plans new shopping center in Cebu

By Irene R. Sino Cruz
Inquirer Visayas

CEBU CITY—Cebu could look forward to more investments in its retail sector as SM Prime Holdings disclosed plans to build another shopping center here.

In an interview, SM Prime president Hans T. Sy said the company was planning to build one or two additional shopping centers in Cebu.

"We are bullish about Cebu," Sy said.

SM Prime spends at least P1 billion to build just one shopping center, Sy said.

Sy was in Cebu Friday to attend the inauguration of the five roads around the SM City Cebu that were repaired and improved out of the taxes advanced by the mall to the Cebu City government, and the unveiling of a huge billboard depicting the mall expansion called The Northwing.

"Definitely, we're looking into a second and third location for a shopping center here in Cebu. We believe that Cebu is an area that we could still expand," Sy said.

While the company is interested in the South Road Properties (SRP), Cebu City's south reclamation project, SM Prime is also looking at other areas, he pointed out.

"It's still early (to say) but if the numbers are right we definitely will go into (putting up a shopping center in the SRP)," Sy said.

The price of the land and the Cebu City government's development plan would be among the basis for choosing the SRP as a shopping center site, he explained.

He said the additional malls would be in the 60,000 to 75,000 sq.m. size similar to the SM Supercenters.

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SHARES AVAILABLE

*CLUB	SELLER	BUYER
Alabang Country Club A/B*	1,100,000/1,300 000*	1,850,000
Alta Vista A/B*/Corp.**	-	300,000/Pls. Call*/Pls Call**
Baguio Country Club	-	500 000
Camp John Hay	Pls. Call	Pls. Call
Canlubang Golf	-	420,000
Canyon Woods	100 000	-
Capitol Hills	50,000	-
Cebu Country Club	Pls. Call	Pls. Call
Celebrity Sports	Pls. Call	80 000
Club Filipino	90,000	-
Eagleridge A/B*/C**	280,000*/350 000**	Pls. Call*
Eastridge A/B*	Pls. Call	-
Evercrest	65,000	-
Fairways & Bluewater	Pls. Call	Pls. Call
Forest Hills A/B*/C**	90,000/Pls. Call*	120,000*
Luisita Golf	Pls. Call	Pls. Call
Manila Golf Corporate	Pls. Call	12,500 000
Manila Golf Individual	Pls. Call	11,600 000
Manila Polo	2 750,000	2,700,000
Manila Southwoods A/B*	250,000/Pls. Call*	-
Makati Sports Club A	200 000	-
Manila Yacht Club Ind.	280,000	-
Metropolitan Club A/B*	160 000	-
Mimosa Ind./C2*/C3**	Pls. Call	Pls. Call/550,000**
Mt. Malarayat A	160,000	-
Orchard A/B*/C**	160,000/Pls. Call*/350.000**	150,000/300 000*
Punta Fuego	Pls. Call	Pls. Call
Quezon City Sports Club	150,000	Pls. Call
Riviera Golf A/B*/C**	80,000/170,000*/250,000**	Pls. Call*
Rockwell Leisure Club	Pls. Call	Pls. Call
Royale Tagaytay CC	65,000	-
Sherwood A/B*/C**	70,000/150,000**	100 000*
Sta. Elena Golf A/B*	-	1,300 000
Subic Golf	190,000	-
Summit Point A	300 000	-
The Palms Country Club	380 000	330 000
Country Club at Tagaytay Highlands	320,000	-
Tagaytay Highlands	650 000	620 000
Tagaytay Midlands	Pls. Call	620,000
The Country Club	2 000,000	-
Tower Club A/B*	150,000/180 000*	-
Valley Golf	200 000	-
Valle Verde Ind.	Pls. Call	-
Wack Wack Golf	Pls. Call	7 000 000

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CLUB	SELLER	BUYER
Alabang Country Club "A" (Filipino)	1 100,000	1,000,000
Alabang Country Club "B" (Foreigner)	-	1,100,000
Anvaya Cove Beach and Nature Club	Please Call	
Baguio Country Club	565,000	540,000
Calatagan Golf Club "A"	40,000	-
Calatagan Golf Club "B"	60,000	50 000
Camp John Hay	-	300,000
Canlubang	550,000	420,000
Capitol Hills	40,000	
Cebu Country Club	1,600,000	1,400 000
Celebrity Sports Club	120,000	90 000
Club Filipino	100,000	90,000
Eagleridge "A"/"B"/"C"	Please Call	-
Forest Hills "A"	100,000	
Forest Hills "B"	150,000	
Forest Hills "C"	200,000	
Luisita Golf "A"	350,000	-
Makati Sports Club "A"	190,000	160,000
Makati Sports Club "B"	200,000	-
Manila Golf (Corporate)	-	12,500 000
Manila Golf (Individual)	-	11,600 000
Manila Polo	2,850,000	2,700 000
Manila Southwoods "A"	300,000	-
Manila Southwoods "B"	750,000	630 000
Manila Yacht Club	250,000	
Mimosa (Individual)	230,000	200 000
Mimosa (Corporate)	600,000	550 000
Mt. Malarayat Gold "A"	180,000	
Mt. Malarayat Gold "C"	350,000	
Orchard Golf Club "A"	180,000	140,000
Orchard Golf Club "B"	310,000	
Orchard Golf Club "C"	370,000	-
Quezon City Sports Club	150,000	125 000
Spa & Lodge	580,000	480 000
Sta. Elena "A"	-	1,300,000
Sta. Elena "B"	2,140,000	1,800 000
Summit Point "A"	280,000	
Tagaytay Country Club	320,000	280 000
Tagaytay Highlands	-	630 000
Tagaytay Midlands	650,000	620 000
Valle Verde (Individual)	100 000	90,000
Valley Golf	200 000	180,000
Wack-Wack Golf Club	Please Call	7,000,000

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OUR 25TH YEAR

SELLING		BUYING	
ALABANG A	1.1M	ALABANG B	1.2M
CANLUBANG GOLF CLUB	500K	BAGUIO COUNTRY CLUB	550K
CELEBRITY SPORTS CLUB	100K	CEBU COUNTRY CLUB	PLS. CALL
EAGLERIDGE A	PLS. CALL	CLUB PUNTA FUEGO	550K
EAGLERIDGE B	260K	CLUB FILIPINO	90K
EAGLERIDGE C	350K	MANILA GOLF CORP	12 6M
EVERCREST A	PLS. CALL	MANILA GOLF IND	11 5M
MANILA POLO CLUB	2.050M	MANILA POLO CLUB	2.5M
MANILA SOUTHWOODS B	660K	MANILA SOUTHWOODS B	PLS. CALL
METROCLUB A	150K	MIMOSA C3	PLS. CALL
METROCLUB B	170K	MIMOSA IND	200K
MIMOSA C-3	600K	ORCHARD C	300K
MT. MALARAYAT A	200K	SHERWOOD HILLS C	120K
MT. MALARAYAT C	380K	SPA & LODGE	450K
ORCHARD A	170K	STA. ELENA A	1.4M
ORCHARD C	350K	STA. ELENA B	1.8M
QUEZON CITY SPORTS	150K	TAGAYTAY MIDLANDS	600K
SPLENDIDO	200K	TAGAYTAY HIGHLANDS GOLF	620K
STA. ELENA A	PLS. CALL	VALLE VERDE	90K
THE PALMS	400K	VALLEY GOLF	200K
VALLE VERDE CORP	300K	WACK WACK	7 0M

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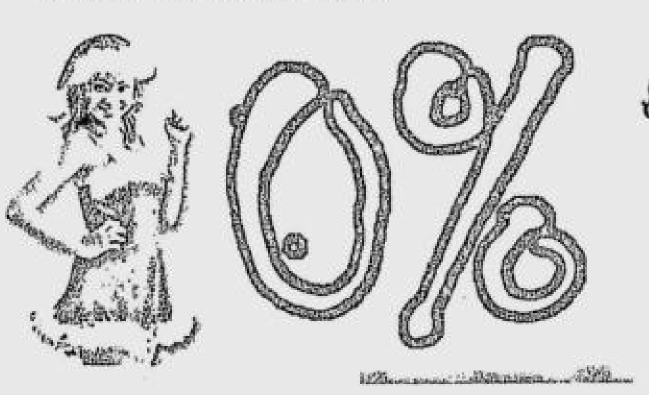

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Intel® Graphics Media Accelerator 950
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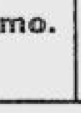

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PHILIPPINE STOCK EXCHANGE

(As of January 19, 2007)

STOCKS	OPEN	HIGH	LOW	CLOSE	VOLUME
BANKS					
Asiatrust Dev. Bank Inc.	7.1	7.1	7.1	7.1	25,000
Banco de Oro Univ. Bank	46	46	45.5	46	3,022,600
Bank of the Phil. Islands	68.5	68.5	67	68	878,900
China Banking Corp.	690	695	690	695	980
Citystate Savings Bank	19.25	19.25	19.25	19.25	500
Export and Ind. Bank A	0.48	0.48	0.48	0.48	450,000
Equitable PCI Bank Inc.	82	82.5	82	82.5	104,800
Metropolitan Bank & Trust	58	58.5	57.5	58.5	5,842,900
Philippine National Bank	47.5	48.5	47.5	48	282,600
Phil. Savings Bank	48.5	49	48.5	48.5	18,000
Rizal Comm. Banking Corp.	30.5	32.5	30.5	32	930,100
Security Bank Corp.	69	69.5	68	69.5	229,300
Union Bank of the Phil.	54	55	53	55	41,100
OTHER FINANCIAL INSTITUTIONS					
Bankard Inc.	0.7	0.7	0.7	0.7	400,000
Citiseconline.Com Inc.	4.85	4.9	4.85	4.9	185,000
First Abacus Financial	0.65	0.65	0.65	0.65	1,000,000
Filipino Fund Inc.	4.9	4.9	4.9	4.9	2,000
First Metro Invest. Corp.	31	31.5	31	31.5	10,000
PCI Leasing & Fin. Inc.	1.62	1.62	1.62	1.62	18,000
Phil. Stock Exchange Inc.	305	310	302.5	305	13,620
Sun Life Financial Inc.	2020	2020	2020	2020	490
Ivantage Corp.	1.62	1.64	1.62	1.64	1,002,000
ELECTRICITY, ENERGY, POWER & WATER					
PNOC Energy Dev. Corp.	5.5	5.5	5.1	5.1	34,099,000
First Gen Corp.	57.5	57.5	55.5	55.5	1,410,400
First Phil Hldgs Corp.	74	74	71	71.5	583,200
Manila Electric Co. A	64	64	63	63.5	409,600
Manila Electric Co. B	66	66	64	65	2,720,100
Manila Water Co. Inc.	9.5	9.5	9.2	9.3	3,790,000
Petron Corp.	4.15	4.15	4.1	4.1	4,713,000
East Asia Power Res. Corp.	0.27	0.27	0.27	0.27	160,000
Trans-Asia Oil and Energy	1.14	1.18	1.14	1.18	2,026,000
FOOD, BEVERAGE & TOBACCO					
Alaska Milk Corp.	3.8	3.8	3.8	3.8	36,000
Ginebra San Miguel Inc.	21	21	21	21	3,500
Jollibee Foods Corp.	43	43.5	43	43.5	499,000
RFM Corp.	1.28	1.28	1.26	1.28	607,000
Roxas Holdings Inc.	2.85	2.9	2.85	2.85	338,000
Swift Food Inc.	0.39	0.39	0.38	0.39	260,000
San Miguel Corp. A	63.5	63.5	63.5	63.5	103,200
San Miguel Corp. B	75	75	74.5	74.5	421,000
Alliance Tuna Int'l. Inc.	2.16	2.16	2.12	2.12	1,773,000
Universal Robina Corp.	19	19	18.75	18.75	1,306,100
CONSTRUCTION, INFRASTRUCTURE & ALLIED SERVICES					
Southeast Asian Cement	1.28	1.28	1.22	1.22	23,091,000
Engineering Equip. Inc.	4.05	4.2	4.05	4.1	435,000
Holcim Philippines Inc.	8.1	8.2	8.1	8.2	308,000
Republic Cement Corp.	4.3	4.3	4.25	4.3	624,000
CHEMICALS					
Chemrez Technologies Inc.	5.1	5.2	5	5.1	3,525,000
Mabuhay Vinyl Corp.	0.63	0.64	0.63	0.64	310,000
DIVERSIFIED INDUSTRIALS					
Geograce Res. Phil. Inc.	0.74	0.76	0.73	0.74	11,150,000
Picop Resources Inc.	0.23	0.23	0.215	0.22	12,460,000
HOLDING FIRMS					
Abacus Con Res & Hdg A	0.0095	0.01	0.0095	0.0095	58,000,000
Abacus Con Res & Hdg B	0.01	0.01	0.01	0.01	15,000,000
Atok-Big Wedge. Inc. B	9.2	9.2	9.2	9.2	1,000
Ayala Corp.	595	595	585	585	193,870
Alsons Cons. Res. Inc.	0.67	0.67	0.67	0.67	150,000
Aboitiz Equity Ventures	9	9.1	8.9	9.1	1,465,000
Alliance Global Group Inc.	8.1	8.2	8.1	8.2	12,000
Ajo.Net Holdings Inc.	0.0775	0.0775	0.07	0.075	257,200,000
A. Soriano Corp.	3.05	3.05	3	3	705,000
APC Group Inc.	0.4	0.4	0.39	0.39	1,380,000
Alcorn Gold Res. Corp.	0.012	0.012	0.012	0.012	372,500,000
Anglo Phil Holdings Corp.	1.08	1.08	1.04	1.04	1,003,000
Baguio Gold Holdings Corp.	3.35	3.35	3.3	3.3	41,000
Balabac Resources & Hldgs	1.14	1.18	1.14	1.18	14,000
Bacnotan Cons Indus Inc.	10.25	10.25	10.25	10.25	50,000
Benpres Holdings Corp.	2.8	2.8	2.55	2.65	43,481,000
DMCI Holdings Inc.	7.2	7.3	7.2	7.3	877,000
Filinvest Dev. Corp.	4.4	4.45	4.4	4.45	477,000
Forum Pacific Inc.	0.3	0.3	0.3	0.3	640,000
House of Investments Inc.	2.3	2.44	2.3	2.42	691,000
J.G. Summit Holdings Inc.	12	12.25	12	12.25	956,500
Medco Holdings	0.29	0.29	0.29	0.29	1,000,000
Magnum Holdings Inc.	4.9	5	4.8	4.85	317,000
Multitech Inv. Corp.	2.06	2.1	2.02	2.06	6,268,000
Pacifica	0.02	0.02	0.02	0.02	12,100,000
Prime Media Holdings Inc.	1	1	1	1	50,000
Solid Group Inc.	0.72	0.72	0.72	0.72	500,000
Singphil Corp.	0.165	0.165	0.16	0.165	6,600,000
SM Investments Corp.	345	345	335	335	268,500
South China Resources Inc.	1.06	1.08	1.06	1.06	300,000
Seafront Resources Corp.	1.7	1.74	1.7	1.7	628,000
Unioil Res. & Holdings Co.	0.29	0.29	0.28	0.29	7,290,000
Wellex Industries Inc.	0.15	0.155	0.145	0.145	5,430,000
PROPERTY					
Ayala Land Inc.	16	16.25	16	16	15,775,400
Belle Corp.	1.24	1.24	1.22	1.22	3,277,000
A Brown Company Inc.	1.7	1.82	1.7	1.78	5,391,000
Crown Equities Inc.	0.48	0.48	0.48	0.48	100,000
Cebu Holdings Inc.	3.6	3.6	3.35	3.35	216,000
C & P Homes Inc.	1.7	1.7	1.68	1.68	353,000
Cebu Prop. Vent. A	1.82	1.82	1.82	1.82	120,000
Cebu Prop. Vent B	1.84	1.84	1.84	1.84	100,000
Cyber Bay Corp.	0.3	0.3	0.3	0.3	390,000
EIB Realty Developers Inc.	0.2	0.2	0.2	0.2	330,000
Empire East Land Inc.	0.68	0.68	0.67	0.67	32,770,000
Edsa Prop. Holdings Inc.	1.62	1.64	1.62	1.64	245,000
Ever-Gotesco Resources	0.07	0.075	0.07	0.075	30,700,000
Filinvest Land Inc.	1.64	1.66	1.58	1.62	73,778,000
Gotesco Land Inc.	0.17	0.185	0.17	0.185	3,840,000
Gotesco Land Inc.B	0.175	0.2	0.175	0.185	2,820,000
Interport Res.	0.0085	0.0085	0.008	0.008	35,000,000
Interport Res. B	0.0085	0.0085	0.0085	0.0085	1,000,000
Keppel Phils. Prop. Inc.	1.36	1.4	1.36	1.4	80,000
Kuok Phil. Properties	0.52	0.52	0.51	0.51	3,440,000
Fil-Estate Land Inc.	0.82	0.82	0.8	0.82	1,250,000
Marsteel Cons. Inc. A	0.018	0.018	0.018	0.018	1,200,000
Marsteel Cons. Inc. B	0.018	0.018	0.018	0.018	700,000
Megaworld Corp.	2.36	2.36	2.3	2.34	46,481,000
Metro Pacific Inv. Corp.	5.1	5.1	5.1	5.1	153,000
Philippine Estates Corp.	0.17	0.17	0.17	0.17	170,000
Polar Property Holdings	2.18	2.2	2	2	220,000
Robinsons Land Corp.	15.5	15.5	15.25	15.25	3,907,600
Phil Realty And Holdings	0.71	0.71	0.69	0.69	5,660,000
SM Development Corp.	3.35	3.35	3.3	3.3	485,000
SM Prime Holdings Inc.	11.75	11.75	11.25	11.25	6,239,100
Uniwide Holdings Inc.	0.105	0.11	0.105	0.11	4,740,000
MEDIA					
ABS-CBN Broadcasting Corp.	20.5	20.5	20.5	20.5	200
Manila Bulletin Pub. Corp.	1.02	1.04	1.02	1.04	40,000
TELECOMMUNICATIONS					
Digital Telecom Phils Inc.	2.02	2.04	1.98	2	16,804,000
Globe Telecom Inc.	1275	1280	1270	1275	25,610
Pilipino Tel. Corp.	6.4	6.5	6.4	6.5	5,403,000
Phil. Long Dis Tel Co.	2500	2570	2500	2550	134,880
INFORMATION TECHNOLOGY					
Boulevard Holdings Inc.	0.24	0.27	0.24	0.27	56,960,000
Ionics Inc.	2.5	2.5	2.48	2.48	1,318,000
IPVG Corp.	4	4.15	3.95	3.95	75,000
Island Info And Tech Inc.	0.06	0.06	0.0575	0.06	9,500,000
ISM Communications Corp.	0.06	0.06	0.06	0.06	9,200,000
Transpacific Broadband	2.46	2.46	2.4	2.42	128,000
Philweb Corp.	0.034	0.035	0.034	0.034	236,100,000
TRANSPORTATION SERVICES					
Asian Terminals Inc.	4.1	4.1	4.1	4.1	10,000
Aboitiz Trans. Sys. Corp.	1.8	1.82	1.8	1.82	182,000
Int'l Container Term'l Sv	23.5	23.75	23.5	23.75	63,600
Lorenzo Shipping Corp.	1.28	1.28	1.28	1.28	60,000
HOTEL & LEISURE					
Leisure & Resorts Corp.	2.12	2.14	2.08	2.1	1,493,000
Manila Jockey Club	3	3	3	3	50,000
Waterfront Phils. Inc.	0.59	0.61	0.59	0.6	2,370,000
EDUCATION					
Far Eastern University	820	820	820	820	100
iPeople Inc.	3.05	3.2	3.05	3.2	51,000
DIVERSIFIED SERVICES					
Macroasia Corp.	2.1	2.1	2.08	2.1	382,000
Paxys Inc.	20.5	22	20	21.5	1,385,300
Philippine Seven Corp.	3.6	3.6	3.5	3.5	15,000
MINING					
Apex Mining Co. Inc. A	5	5	4.7	4.8	749,000
Apex Mining Co. Inc. B	5	5	4.8	4.9	494,000
Abra Mining & Industrial	0.011	0.011	0.011	0.011	121,000,000
Atlas Cons. Min & Dev't	9.1	9.2	9.1	9.2	2,438,000
Benguet Corp. A	8.9	9	8.9	9	60,000
Dizon Copper Silver Mines	2.85	2.85	2.55	2.85	12,000
Lepanto Cons Mng. Co. A	0.28	0.28	0.26	0.26	7,080,000
Lepanto Cons. Mng. Co. B	0.29	0.3	0.29	0.3	4,010,000
Manila Mining Corp. A	0.027	0.027	0.026	.0261	,111,700,000
Manila Mining Corp. B	0.031	0.031	0.029	0.03	634,800,000
Omico Corp.	0.013	0.013	0.012	0.012	178,800,000
Philex Mining Corp.	3.6	3.65	3.5	3.55	7,716,000
Semirara Mining Corp.	15.75	15.75	15.25	15.5	242,400
United Paragon Mining Co.	0.72	0.72	0.69	0.69	760,000
Vulcan Ind'l	1.58	1.6	1.52	1.56	10,119,000
OIL					
Basic Petroleum Corp.	0.28	0.28	0.28	0.28	2,080,000
Oriental Pet. & Min. A	0.011	0.011	0.011	0.011	36,500,000
Oriental Pet. & Min. B	0.012	0.013	0.012	0.012	71,900,000
The Philodrill Corp. A	1.08	1.08	1.06	1.06	1,005,000
The Philodrill Corp. B	1.1	1.1	1.08	1.08	549,000
Petroenergy Res. Corp.	10.5	10.5	10.25	10.5	184,300

CURRENCIES

January 21, 2007 Country	Unit	Euro Equivalent	Dollar Equivalent	Peso Equivalent
United States	Dollar	0.772022	1.000000	48.8460
Japan	Yen	0.006367	0.008247	0.4028
United Kingdom	Pound	1.524280	1.974400	96.4415
Hong Kong	Dollar	0.098868	0.128064	6.2554
Switzerland	Franc	0.619054	0.801860	39.1677
Canada	Dollar	0.658385	0.852806	41.6562
Singapore	Dollar	0.502651	0.651084	31.8028
Australia	Dollar	0.608418	0.788084	38.4948
Bahrain	Dinar*	2.047804	2.652520	129.5650
Saudi Arabia	Rial	0.205845	0.266631	13.0239
Brunei	Dollar	0.501020	0.648971	31.6996
Indonesia	Rupiah	0.000085	0.000110	0.0054
Thailand	Baht	0.021920	0.028393	1.3869
UAE	Dirham	0.210205	0.272279	13.2997
Euro	Euro	1.000000	1.295300	63.2702
Korea	Won	0.000825	0.001068	0.0522
China	Yuan**	0.099347	0.128684	6.2857
Argentina	Peso	0.250860	0.324939	15.8720
Brazil	Real	0.361942	0.468823	22.9001
Denmark	Kroner	0.134312	0.173974	8.4979
India	Rupee	0.017486	0.022650	1.1064
Malaysia	Ringgit	0.220577	0.285714	13.9560
Mexico	New Peso	0.070646	0.091508	4.4698
New Zealand	Dollar	0.535866	0.694107	33.9044
Norway	Kroner	0.119440	0.154710	7.5570
Pakistan	Rupee	0.012690	0.016437	0.8029
South Africa	Rand	0.108278	0.140252	6.8507
Sweden	Kroner	0.109724	0.142126	6.9423
Taiwan	Nt Dollar	0.023547	0.030501	1.4899

GMA Network to get perks for ₱300-M venture

By Ronnel W. Domingo

THE BOARD OF INVESTMENTS APPROVED the granting of tax perks to GMA Network Inc.'s P300-million venture in the export of television programs and movies.

According to the BOI, the all-Filipino firm's venture would be wholly funded with equity which would cover the cost of broadcast equipment, program rights and working capital.

Expected to create 47 new jobs when fully operational, the project would be given a nonpioneer status, which entitles the company to an income tax holiday of up to four years, duty-free importation of capital goods, and other fiscal and nonfiscal perks.

The TV programs and movies would be exported to international firms that provide direct-to-home and cable TV services.

The products are played using the digital Broadcast Automation System and are routed via satellite uplink facilities for transmission.

Also, GMA Network would use a fully redundant multi-channel-per-carrier platform to transmit programs and movies on the Measat-2 satellite. Its transmission is received by local and international relays and cable affiliates for retransmission and redistribution in their systems.

The company has already identified buyers of its exports, including Comcast, DirectTV, Time Warner, Cablevision, Wave, San Bruno, Chua Vista, RCN Queens, Charter LA, Cox Las Vegas, GCI Alaska, and other service providers in the United States.

Products will also be sent to PCCW and Icable in Hong Kong, Starhub in Singapore, GTA in Guam, as well as clients in Japan, Malaysia and Saipan.

Last year, the Department of Trade and Industry said it would actively promote the export of local TV shows, movies and music after an Indonesian media outfit bought the rights to air fantasy series Encantandia and Mulawin in the region's most populous nation.

Trade Secretary Peter B. Favila had said the interest shown by Indonesian media outfits to import Filipino TV programs showed that there was a very strong interest abroad for Philippine entertainment products.

Favila added that, in the case of Muslim-dominated Indonesia, the entertainment industry needed to be adaptive with content and presentation of exportable programs, considering the market's conservative culture.

Submarine cable system to boost RP telecom links

By Daxim L. Lucas and Riza T. Olchondra

HONG KONG-BASED ASIA NETCOM HAS unveiled a plan to add a new trans-Pacific portion to its regional submarine cable system in light of recent telecommunications difficulties caused by the Dec. 26, 2006 earthquake off Taiwan.

Dubbed EAC Pacific, the new 23,500-kilometer infrastructure will extend the existing infrastructure with a new trans-Pacific ring.

The project, expected to be completed by July 2008, consists of a northern route connecting Japan to the United States, and a southern route linking the Philippines to the US, via Guam and Hawaii.

EAC Pacific will also include a sub-sea link between the Philippines directly with Japan, which will close the ring design and integrate the trans-Pacific infrastructure with the current system.

In a press statement, Asia Netcom said that EAC Pacific has received committed funds of $636 million through its partners, investors and debt holders.

The system, which will use a new innovative capital structure that is hybrid of the "traditional" club cable and a "private cable" structure, will be operational in July 2008.

Asia Netcom will announce its landing partners for the system by April 2007, and will complete vendor selection by May 2007.

"In light of the recent events that followed the Boxing Day (Dec. 26) earthquakes off the coast of southern Taiwan, there is clearly a need for more diversity between Asia and the US," Asia Netcom CEO Bill Barney said in his statement. "EAC Pacific is designed to enhance the connectivity options of the fast growing South Asian region and create a dedicated expressway for that region to connect to the US, as well as Japan and North Asia."

The new EAC Pacific system will feature four fiber pairs, each capable of supporting a minimum design capacity of 2.56 Terabits per second using 64-wavelength "dense wavelength division multiplexing" technology capable of transporting 10 Gigabits per second per wavelength.

Asia Netcom operates an extensive telecommunications network infrastructure in the Asia Pacific region, including a privately owned sub-sea cable system, EAC, as well as extensive terrestrial backhauls and "telehouses" in all key Asian markets.

The firm provides a portfolio of city-to-city connectivity, data communications and IP-based solutions and services to enterprise, ISP and carrier customers in the Asia Pacific region.

Spug urged to do its bit for tourism

$2-B Japan grant being eyed to fund small, micro hydropower projects

By Abigail L. Ho

THE SMALL POWER UTILITIES GROUP (Spug) of the National Power Corp. can help boost tourism in its covered areas by tapping Japan's $2-billion grant for East Asian economies and engaging in small and micro hydropower projects.

Energy Secretary Raphael Lotilla said undertaking small and micro hydropower projects in some of the country's small islands could help reduce electricity rates there.

Right now, the islands that draw the most tourists are heavily dependent on generators using expensive bunker and diesel fuels, Lotilla said.

He proposed a shift to hydropower plants, if there are available water resources, "or even smaller coal-fired power plants."

Lotilla cited the case of Masbate, where Napocor Spug had already transferred to Masbate Progress Power Consortium (MPPC) the responsibility of supplying power to the island.

With MPPC providing power to Masbate, power rates would be pegged at a rate of P6.99 per kilowatt-hour (kWh), half the current rate of between P12 and P14 per kWh.

MPPC, a group composed of EEI Power and Islands Grid Network Philippines, would ensure reliable electricity supply to Masbate province all year round.

Under the terms of the agreement, MPPC would supply 13 megawatts (MW) of dependable power supply to Masbate, a significant jump from the 8 MW of electricity supply that residents currently enjoyed.

This 8-MW power supply was not even that reliable, as Masbate residents usually had to endure several hours of power outages each day.

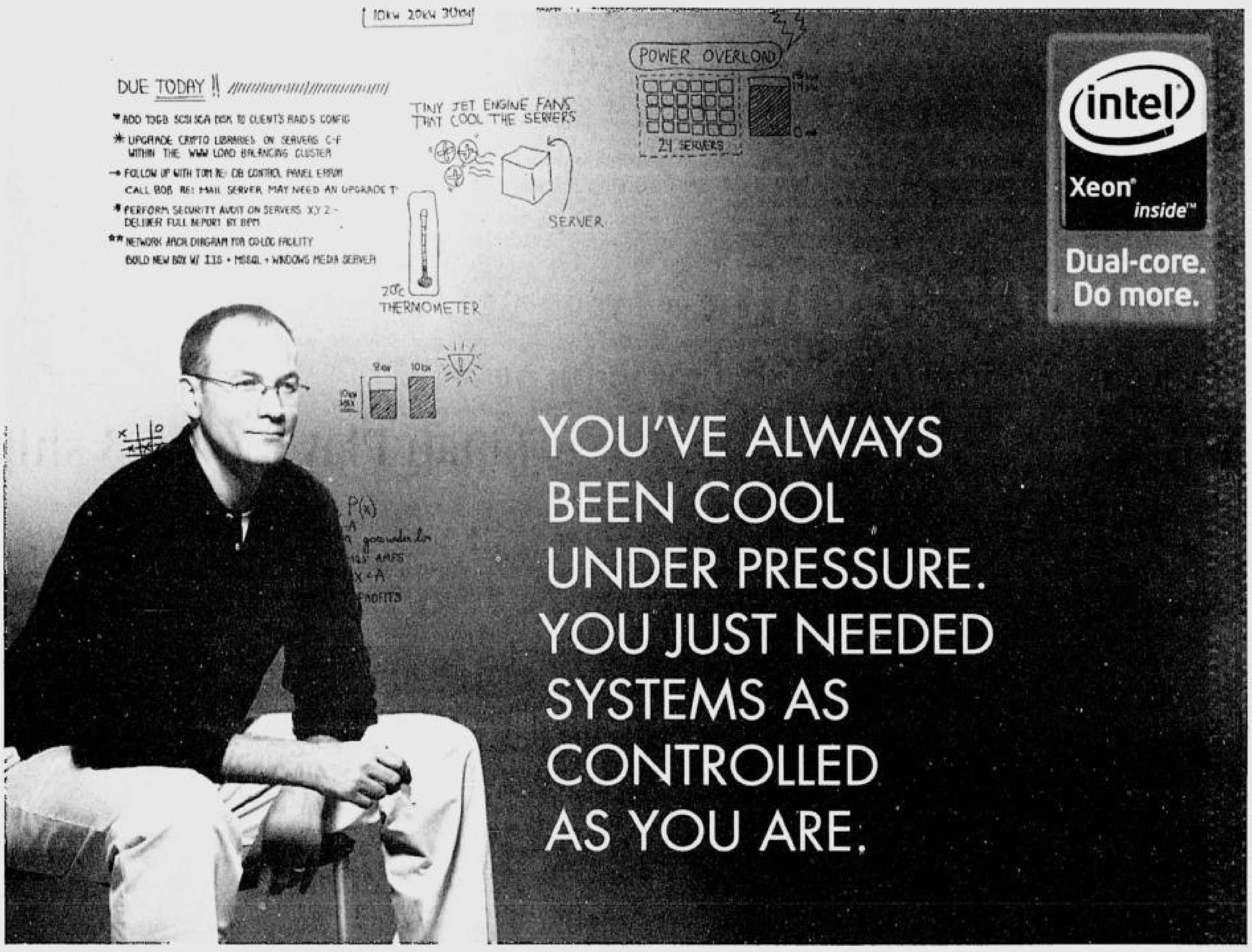
To undertake such projects, Lotilla said the country could draft proposals to be able to avail itself of grants from the Japanese government.

"The ability to tap this ($2-billion) grant is based on how we draft our project proposals," he said.

Japan has committed a $2-billion grant for energy-related projects, aimed at improving energy access, including electricity infrastructure and rural electrification, as well as energy efficiency and conservation.

"Assistance will take into account socio-economic situations in each (East Asia Summit) member country. In addition, investment loans of (the Japan Bank for International Cooperation) will be actively utilized," the East Asia-Japan Cooperation Initiative for Clean Energy and Sustainable Growth said.

LOTILLA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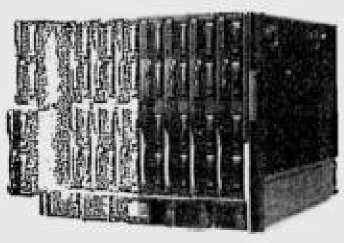

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Mind-reading phones, 3D Internet shopping

IBM gives a peek of what to expect in next 5 years

By Abigail L. Ho

MIND-READING MOBILE PHONES, remote healthcare, automatic speech translation, 3D Internet and increasingly small gadgets—no, this isn't a glimpse into Star Trek universe or even the Matrix parallel dimension.

According to computer giant IBM Corp., these are all innovations that will change the way people work, live and play in just the next five years.

IBM's Next Five in Five, a list based on market and societal trends as well as emerging technologies from IBM's Labs worldwide, show that in the next five years, the ubiquitous mobile phone would be able to "learn" more about its user.

"Advanced 'presence' technology will give mobile phones and (personal digital assistants) the ability to automatically learn about their users' whereabouts and preferences as they commute, work and travel," IBM said.

"Presence" technology is currently used in instant messaging, which makes it possible to locate and identify a user as soon as he logs on to a network.

Five years from now, IBM said most mobile devices would be better able to learn about and adapt to their users' preferences and needs.

Remote healthcare should also be more mainstream by 2012, allowing millions of people with chronic health problems such as diabetes, heart ailment, kidney or circulatory problems to have their conditions automatically monitored remotely.

"Device makers and healthcare professionals will take a proactive approach to ongoing, remote monitoring of patients, delivered through sensors in the home, worn on the person or in devices and packaging," IBM said.

"These advances will also allow patients to better monitor their own health and help clinicians provide the ongoing preventive care regardless of a person's location," it added.

For frequent flyers, the next five years would also bring a welcome treat, as real-time speech translation becomes the norm.

IBM speech innovations currently allow PDA users to translate menus into Japanese, as well as let media firms monitor Chinese and Arabic news broadcasts over the Web in English, and doctors communicate with patients in Spanish.

Such real-time translation technologies and services, IBM said, would be built into mobile phones, handheld devices and cars.

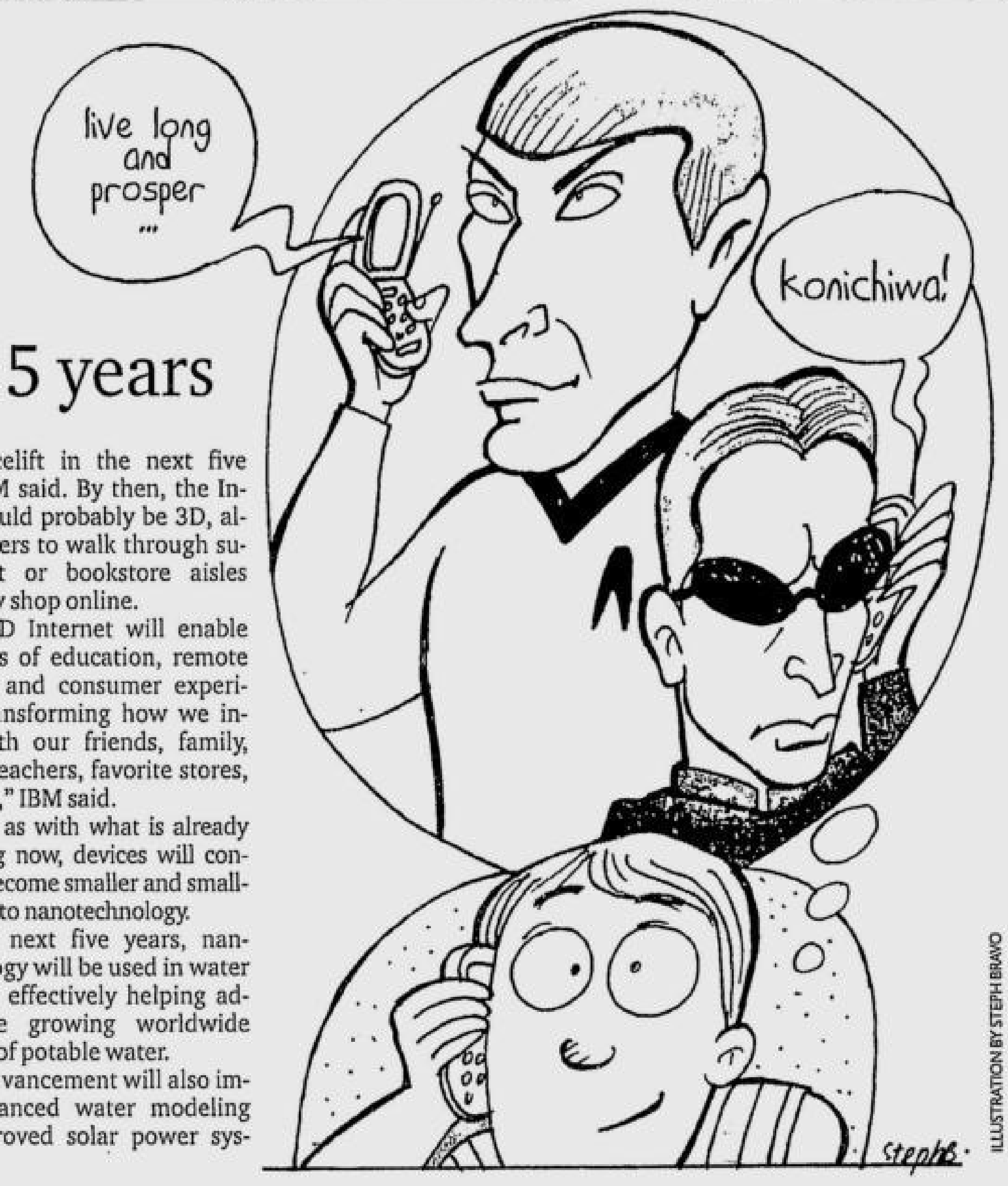
The Internet would also likely get a facelift in the next five years, IBM said. By then, the Internet would probably be 3D, allowing users to walk through supermarket or bookstore aisles when they shop online.

"The 3D Internet will enable new kinds of education, remote medicine and consumer experiences, transforming how we interact with our friends, family, doctors, teachers, favorite stores, and more," IBM said.

Finally, as with what is already happening now, devices will continue to become smaller and smaller, thanks to nanotechnology.

In the next five years, nanotechnology will be used in water filtration, effectively helping address the growing worldwide shortage of potable water.

This advancement will also impact advanced water modeling and improved solar power systems.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Filipinos find ways to make 'free' calls

By Riza T. Olchondra

MANY FILIPINOS CALL SOMEBODY USing their mobile phone then hang up before the other party answers to avoid spending even one peso on communication, said a study of grassroots cellular and fixed line use in five developing countries in Asia.

The LIRNEAsia study conducted through AC Nielsen said about 9.72 million Filipinos are in the lowest socio-economic classes, and 65 percent of them just phone and hang up or "missed calls" to save on telecommunications costs.

The study said there was a general perception in the Philippines that telecommunications devices and services were expensive, so users have devised ways to save on costs, primarily through texting and, increasingly, "missed calling", which was defined as the practice of calling and hanging up.

"Missed calls have come to have a sort of code between the people who use them to communicate. To some, one missed call and two missed calls in succession signal different levels of urgency. To some, it means 'Call me,' and even a romantic meaning such as 'I'm thinking of you,'" LIRNEAsia researcher Ayesha Zainudeen said.

An informal street survey by the INQUIRER revealed that the practice of phoning then hanging up indeed helps Filipinos save on telecommunications costs, especially if simple messages are too short to send as a text message.

Zeny Zapanta, a newspaper vendor, said she phones then hangs up as a signal that she has an urgent message but can't afford to call, while coconut juice seller Nonoy Gubano said he "missed calls" as a way of asking the recipient to send him phone credits.

Even their more well-off counterparts have their own uses for missed calls.

John Roson, a writer-editor for an electronic daily, said his sister "missed calls" him to answer yes-no questions. "My sister uses [the practice] to answer 'yes' when she's low on (prepaid) load. When there is no response, it means 'no,'" he said.

Roson also said he phones then hangs up to check whether the cellular phone of a person who has not answered his text message was unavailable or out of the coverage area.

Vanessa Javier, site support officer for eTelecare, said she "missed calls" someone she just sent a text message to, just for emphasis.

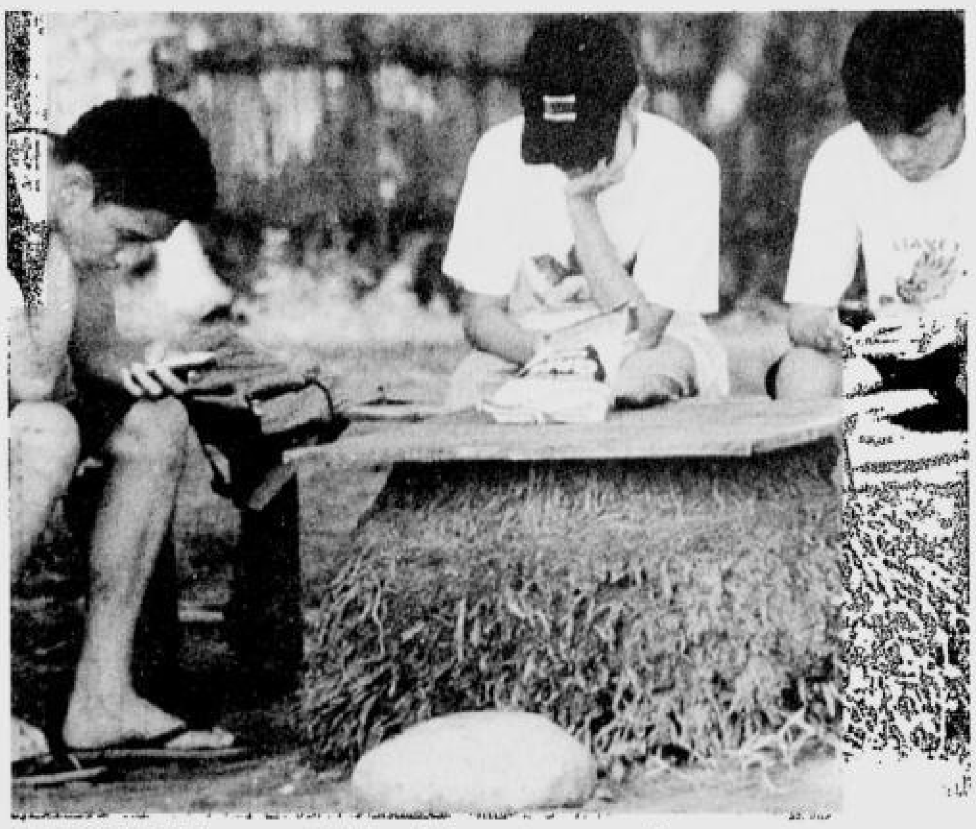
The LIRNEAsia study, called "Teleuse on a Shoestring 2: A study of telecom use at the bottom of the pyramid in Asia," also revealed that about 70 percent of the poorest Filipinos find ways to access a phone, such as the mobile phone of a household member or even a friend who lives in another household.

The study also found that those with cellular phones spend about $2 a month on services, which include voice calls and text messaging, and that even the poorest Filipinos want to buy a mobile phone within the next two years.

In the meantime, the cost barrier to owning a cellular phone has driven the increasing use of second-hand mobile handsets, prepaid services and text messaging, which the average Filipino does at least once a day.

The study involved face-to-face interviews with 8,660 respondents, ages 18 to 60 years in 2006. The study covered five countries, including India, Pakistan, Sri Lanka, Philippines and Thailand. Of the total survey sample, 1,100 respondents came from the Philippines.

LIRNEasia is regional, non-profit ICT policy and regulation capacity-building organization currently funded primarily by the International Development Research Centre of Canada. Additional information is available at www.lirneasia.net.



70 PERCENT of the poorest Filipinos find ways to access a phone.

Japan PlayStation 3 shipments hit 1M

TOKYO—SHIPMENTS IN JAPAN OF the new PlayStation 3 video game machines reached 1 million Tuesday, Sony said, hitting the company's target about two weeks behind schedule.

Sony had planned to ship 2 million PlayStation 3 machines around the world by the end of last year. Last week, Tokyo-based Sony Corp. said it met its shipping target of 1 million PS3 consoles in the United States in 2006.

It projected shipping another million domestically during the same period. But speculation had been growing that PS3 sales may be faltering in Japan.

Sony Computer Entertainment brushed off such worries, noting in Tuesday's press release that a global shipment of 2 million reached within about two months after a machine's launch is the fastest pace for any game console ever put out by the company.

Masayuki Otani, deputy chief of research at Maruwa Securities, said PS3 sales were struggling in Japan with excess stock languishing at retailers. And the number of units shipped from Sony doesn't equal the total units sold at retailers, he said.

"The launch has a lot of problems, but things could pick up with time," Otani said.

Sony Computer Entertainment spokeswoman Nanako Kato acknowledged shipments had slipped behind schedule. But she said the company was on schedule to meet plans for global shipment of 6 million PS3 machines by Mar. 31.

It was more important to have enough machines by year-end in the US because of the critical importance of Christmas shopping there, Kato said. Japan sales continue to be strong during the New Year because children receive holiday allowances.

THE PLAYSTATION 3 went on sale in Japan and the US late last year. It is set to go on sale in Europe in March.

AP

PlayStation 3 sales were expected to be strong in coming months because of the expected release of new game software in the works, according to Sony's game unit.

PlayStation 3, which has been delayed twice, went on sale in Japan and the US late last year. It is set to go on sale in Europe in March.

The relative lack of games to play on PS3 so far has added to concerns about the machine's prospects at a time when the Wii console from Japanese rival Nintendo Co., which makes Pokemon and Super Mario games, has been a surprise hit.

The Wii, which comes with a wandlike remote controller, competed against PlayStation 3 during the critical Christmas shopping season.

Nintendo is also targeting shipment of 6 million for its Wii machines by the end of the fiscal year through March. A major appeal of Wii is its cheaper price at about US$250, while PS3 costs US$500 and US$600.

The success of the PlayStation 3 is critical for Sony as it tackles a turnaround after suffering a big slump in its core electronics sector in recent years.

The PS3 supports Blu-ray disk next-generation video, whose arrival is expected to encourage sales of new gadgets.

Otani, the analyst, said most consumers still don't have the latest TV models that will allow players to fully appreciate the spectacular image quality offered on the PS3.

"Nintendo should be declaring victory," he said.

But Hirokaza Hamamura, president of Japanese game publisher Enterbrain Inc., said PS3 was doing OK, and it only looked bad because of the sellout popularity of the Wii. PS3 sales are running at about 85 percent of the inventory, in contrast to 100 percent for Wii, he said.

"Any product selling at about 85 percent can be considered a hit," said Hamamura.

Sales of PS3 could pick up in coming months, but it's uncertain whether Sony will be able to meet the 6 million global shipment target for fiscal 2006, as sales are lagging behind the initial company plan, Hamamura said.

Sony shares ended 0.2 percent lower in Tokyo at 5,690 yen ($47: 36 euros). *AP*

Yahoo launches personal money management website

SAN FRANCISCO—YAHOO launched a money management website on Friday, vying with rival Internet search giants to be the preferred place for people to do their online financial planning.

Yahoo Personal Finance features nine "resource centers" devoted to topics such as banking, budgeting, taxes, college and retirement.

Featuring information from Consumer Reports, the Wall Street Journal, Smart Money and CNNMoney.com, the site, http://finance.yahoo.com/personal-finance, offers how-to guides for financial planning and scores of programs to calculate long-range costs or investments, such as loan payments and retirement funds.

Yahoo also linked the website to its popular Answers forum, which taps into the wisdom of online users worldwide for replies to questions.

The personal finance website is free for users, with the Sunnyvale, California-based search engine aiming to reap revenue from advertisers interested in targeting people researching important money matters.

Yahoo has long featured a finance website with information and tools for people managing assets or investing in stocks or bonds.

Yahoo Finance has analysis and management tools as well as message boards, stock charts, brokerage reports and streaming stock quotes.

Online search colossus Google said last week it is working with US regulators and the New York Stock Exchange (NYSE) to arrange to stream real-time stock prices to users of Google Finance and some of its other properties.

"The more up-to-date the information, the more valuable it is," Google product manager Katie Jacobs Stanton wrote in a message on the Mountain View, California company's website.

"What's really important is getting free, easy and fast access to real-time quotes so you know how the market or your company is doing now, not as of 20 minutes ago," she said.

Google said it planned to stream the NYSE trading information live to people's mobile devices.

"It won't matter if you're on Wall Street or Main Street—you'll have free, easy and fast access to real-time prices from NYSE on Google," Stanton wrote.

Microsoft offers financial planning, investing and stock resources along with advice and other money management tools at its MSN Money website.

The search engines were seeking to bolster their own finances by winning the devotion of online users whose visits can be converted into advertising revenues. *AFP*

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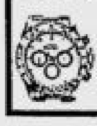

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BICOL UNIVERSITY
Legazpi City

REPUBLICATION OF THE NOTICE OF SEARCH FOR THE NEW UNIVERSITY PRESIDENT AND EXTENDING THE DEADLINE OF SUBMISSION OF APPLICATIONS

By virtue of Referendum No. 01, series of 2007, the Bicol University Board of Regents has authorized the re-publication of the **Notice of Search for the New Bicol University President** and at the same time extending the deadline of submission of pertinent documents evidencing compliance with the following requirements to **February 14, 2007:**

Applicants must possess the following qualifications:

1. Must be a Filipino citizen
2. Preferably a holder of an earned doctoral degree
3. Preferably not more than sixty (60) years old at the time of application
4. At least five (5) years of relevant managerial and administrative experience
5. Morally upright
6. Has not been convicted by final judgment of any crime involving moral turpitude
7. Proven capability in resource generation and networking
8. Experience or involvement in community service

Required clearances, where applicable:

1. Ombudsman
2. Civil Service Commission
3. National Bureau of Investigation
4. Regional Trial Court
5. Provincial Prosecutor's Office

N.B. While the 1st two (2) clearances are required only from applicants who are already in government service, all applicants both from the government and private sectors must submit the last three (3).

Application/Nomination should be accompanied by:

1. Detailed Curriculum Vitaé and documentary evidences supportive of qualifications.
2. Statement of Vision, Mission and Thrusts for Bicol University
3. Medical Clearance that include results of drug test
4. Result of Neuro-Psychiatric Examination in a sealed envelope

Deadline of submission is extended to February 14, 2007

Submit applications including credentials with duly certified supporting documents in five sets to:

THE CHAIRPERSON
Search Committee for the BU Presidency
c/o Dr. Milagros S. Esparrago
Commission on Higher Education
Regional Office 5
EM's Barrio-South
Barangay 2
Legazpi City

or, to:

OFFICE OF COMMISSIONER NENALYN P. DEFENSOR
c/o Ms. Jennilyn M. Salubayba
Commisson on Higher Education
5th Floor, DAP Building San Miguel Avenue
Ortigas Center
Pasig City

(PDI – January 22 & 24, 2007)

BOARD OF INVESTMENTS

dti TRADE & INDUSTRY PHILIPPINES

NOTICE

Notice is hereby given that **GEELINE GARMENTS INTERNATIONAL CORPORATION** with office address **Jose Rizal St., Poblacion, Padre Garcia, Batangas** is applying for registration with the Board of Investments (BOI) as an **Expanding Export Producer of Garments** on a **Non-Pioneer Status** with a capacity of **74,880 pieces** per year with project/plant site located at **Jose Rizal St., Poblacion, Padre Garcia, Batangas**.

Any person with valid objection/s on the above-mentioned project may file his/her objection in writing, under oath, with the BOI within three (3) days from the date of this publication.

(Sgd.) RUDY B. CAÑA
Director
Project Evaluation and Registration Department

Industry & Investments Building 385 Sen. Gil J. Puyat Avenue,
Makati City, Philippines • Tel.: (632) 897-6682
Fax Nos.: (632) 895-3521 (IPG) (632) 895-3981 (IG)
(632) 895-3978 (TSG) (632) 890-3051 (AD)
E-mail OSAC@boi.gov.ph
Homepage: http://www.boi.gov.ph
Cable address: INVESTBOARD • P.O. Box 1672 Makati

(PDI–Jan. 22, 2007)

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BOHOL II ELECTRIC COOPERATIVE, INC.
(BOHECO II)
Cantagay, Jagna, Bohol

Telefax No. (038) 5310023 or Tel. No. (038) 2382215

INVITATION FOR BIDS NO. 2007-01

Bohol II Electric Cooperative, Inc. (BOHECO II) with office address at Cantagay, Jagna, Bohol is inviting eligible bidders for the supply and delivery of various Line Hardware Materials and Conductor Bare Wires thru Subsidy fund and General Fund.

Sealed bid proposals shall be received not later than 10 a.m. of January 30, 2007 at BOHECO II Main Office, Cantagay, Jagna, Bohol.

Interested bidders may obtain information, secure list of bidding documents from BOHECO II Main Office, Cantagay, Jagna, Bohol.

Bid documents may be purchased upon payment of a non-refundable fee of Two Thousand Pesos (P2,000.00)

BOHECO II reserves the right to reject any or all bids with any defects therein and accept the offer most advantageous to the cooperative.

To all interested bidders please prepare the following documents for your accreditation. **(For non-accredited suppliers only)**

1. Company's Profile
2. Mayor's / Business Permit
3. Audited Financial Statement
4. DTI and SEC Registration

Bid Bond: (Bid security in the amount of not less than **five percent (5%)** of the total bid price).

(Sgd.) ENGR. EUGENIO R. TAN, SR.
Resident Manager

(PDI – January 22, 2007)

OBITUARIES

Death Notices

Judge Eleuterio Filler Guerrero
(May 25, 1945 - January 19, 2007)

His remains lie in state at La Funeraria Paz, inside Manila Memorial Park, Sucat Rd., Parañaque City.

Interment will be on January 24, 2007 after the 9:00 am Mass at Everest Hills Memorial Park, Susana Heights, Muntinlupa City.

Elisa Moreno Mohnani
Peacefully joined our Lord on January 20, 2007.

Her body lies in state at Chapel Freesia of the Sanctuarium, 739 G. Araneta Ave., Quezon City.

Interment will be on January 25, 2007 at the Loyola Memorial Park, Parañaque City.

Capt. Job G. Sorilla
Peacefully joined our Lord on January 14, 2007.

His body lies in state at San Isidro de Labrador, Merry Homes II Subd., Zabarte, Caloocan City.

Interment will be on January 28, 2007 at the Eternal Garden Memorial Park, Baesa, Caloocan City.

The Missionary Sisters Servants of the Holy Spirit
announce the death of

SISTER AURICE, S.Sp.S
(NELLY LOZADA PALMA)

on January 21, 2007 at the age of 74 at Our Lady of Lourdes Hospital, Sta. Mesa, Manila.

Mass of the Resurrection will be offered on January 24, 2007 at 9:00 AM at the Christ the King Chapel, E. Rodriguez Ave., Quezon City.

Interment will follow at the Christ the King Cemetery.

NILDA FALCON LINAO

Peacefully joined our Creator on January 17, 2007 at the age of 63.

Her bereaved husband **EMMANUEL REYES LINAO**; children **ERWIN**, **NADINE** and **EMMANUEL, Jr.**; relatives and friends request the pious readers to pray for the eternal repose of her soul.

Her remains lie in state at the Marian Memorial Chapels, Marcos Highway, Antipolo City.

Cremation will be at the Loyola Memorial Park, Marikina at 11:00 a.m. tomorrow, January 23, 2007 after the 8:30 a.m. Mass at Marian Memorial Chapels.

Message of Thanks

Do not let your hearts be troubled....
In my Father's house there are many dwelling places....
And if I go and prepare a place for you, I will come back again and take you to myself,
so that where I am you also may be. ***John 14***

To our dear relatives and friends:
We have laid to rest our beloved

Dr. CLEMENS JOHN C. CONCEPCION
"Mengie"

Who joined his Creator last January 14, 2007.

His death saddens us all but we also rejoice that he is now in our Father's house.

We sincerely convey our deepest gratitude and appreciation to all those who prayed, offered Holy Masses, sent flowers, visited and kept vigil, attended the funeral rites and condoled with us.

The Concepcion and Fuentes Families

I am the way, the truth and the life. No one comes to the Father except through Me. John 14:6

An obituary with a picture can be a fitting tribute to your departed loved one.

Always caring... **INQUIRER OBITUARIES** **WE ACCEPT CREDIT CARDS** and bank-to-bank payments

OBITUARY REQUIREMENTS:
❶ Copy of Death Certificate ❷ Any identification document (I.D.)

Free lay forum on heart risk factors

A LAY FORUM ON LIFE-THREATENING conditions that complicate hypertension and cholesterol problems, or dyslipidemia, will be the kick-off activity for the 12th Joint Annual Convention of the Philippine Society of Hypertension (PSH) and the Philippine Lipid and Atherosclerosis Society (PLAS).

Renowned local experts will serve as resource persons for the lay forum which is scheduled on Jan. 28, Sunday, from 1 p.m. to 5 p.m. at Function Room Sapphire A and B, Crowne Plaza Galleria (Manila) Hotel in Ortigas, Pasig City.

It is a pre-convention activity and part of a series of public education campaigns conducted by PSH and PLAS as both organizations pursue programs to assist in controlling the upsurge of cardiovascular diseases, which remain as the country's top cause of deaths.

All the major risk factors, including high blood pressure, cholesterol problems, obesity, smoking and stress will be tackled by a panel of selected medical experts who will give short lectures followed by an interactive question-and-answer session with all lay participants. Practical tips will be given on how to control these risk factors and prevent heart attacks and strokes particularly in those who are at risk.

The expert panel includes Dr. Nelson Abelardo, PSH president, Dr. Ruby Go, PLAS president, Dr. Jesse Baylon, Fely Velandria, a nutritionist, and Napoleon Caballero, a physical therapist. The overall coordinator of the forum is Dr. Rosa Allyn Sy.

The forum is open to the public for free but due to limited seats, advance registration is required. For inquiries and registration, call the PSH-PLAS secretariat at 687-7073 or 687-2841. Deadline for registration is Jan. 22.

SECURITY BANK, TRENDS AND TECHNOLOGIES INK DEAL

Security Bank Corp, one of the country's top private commercial banks, recently inked a deal with Trends and Technologies Inc, the leading solutions provider for ICT in the Philippines, for a data communications upgrade project. In this venture, Trends and Technologies will migrate Security Bank's entire LAN/WAN infrastructure to purely Cisco solutions. Shown here signing the agreement are (2nd and 3rd from left) Hasan Fard, chair and CEO, Trends and Technologies Inc, and Joven Hernandez, senior vice president, Security Bank. Witnessing the contract signing are (from left) Luichi Robles, country manager, Cisco Systems Philippines; Belen Lim, senior vice president, Security Bank; and Daniel Yu, first vice president, Security Bank.

UNICEF'S SOWC 2007 REPORT LAUNCHED

The United Nations Children's Fund (Unicef), in cooperation with the National Commission on the Role of Filipino Women (NCRFW), recently launched the State of the World's Children (SOWC) 2007 Report in Cebu City. This flagship report from Unicef examines the disempowerment that women face throughout their lives-and outlines what must be done to eliminate gender discrimination and empower women and children. Shown holding a copy of the report are (from left) Dale Rutstein, Unicef Section Chief for Communication; Dr. Nicholas Alipui, Unicef Country Representative; Anupama Rao Singh, Unicef Regional Director for East Asia and the Pacific; Myrna Yao, NCRFW Chairperson; and Emmeline Verzosa, NCRFW Executive Director.

PNB, Gawad Kalinga team up vs RP poverty

PNB PRESIDENT and CEO Omar Byron Mier (center) poses with Gawad Kalinga executive director Antonio Meloto (2nd from left) following their MOA signing at the PNB Financial Center. With them are PNB FSVP Ramon Lim (2nd from right), PNB SVP Christian Jerome Dobles (right), and Gawad Kalinga national coordinator Luis Oquiñena.

THE PHILIPPINE NATIONAL BANK (PNB) recently forged a historic partnership with non-governmental organization Gawad Kalinga (GK) to provide donations of property, financial assistance, and valuable human resource towards the building of Gawad Kalinga communities all over the country.

GK employs a holistic, integrated, and sustainable effort towards nation-building by alleviating poverty-particularly through the planning and construction of decent homes. It is estimated that one third of the entire Philippine population is comprised of squatters or slum dwellers.

Previous GK partnerships with corporations, groups, and individuals here and abroad have often involved financial donations to fund the building of houses and other community facilities. Local government units and private individuals have been doing their part by providing land on which to build homes.

PNB is set to respond with a corporate approach that will harness the deep-rooted Filipino value of *malasakit* through the bank's 5,700 employees in more than 320 branches nationwide, from Batanes Island to Jolo. PNB also committed to empower 100 offices overseas to promote Gawad Kalinga worldwide.

PNB's unique involvement as one corporate family will provide another step in addressing the problem of landlessness. The partnership with GK is expected to contribute to the work of Gawad Kalinga to reach its target of building 700,000 homes in 7,000 communities in seven years.

1st 'White Suite' at Bayview Park Hotel

EXPERIENCE THE "WHITE Suite". Rekindle your romance and be mesmerized. Bayview Park Hotel, "your home by the bay", launches the most ambitious Suite Room.

At almost 50 sqm, the "White Suite" has extraordinary facilities to complete your stay, with a specially made Jacuzzi, well-crafted furniture for living and dining areas, a king size bed, curtains, all in white motif and accentuated with red as a symbol of romance.

For only P8, 000++ for an overnight stay for two, enjoy these amenities: a buffet breakfast for two at the Lobby Lounge; welcome fruit basket; and a bottle of wine at turn down service.

Call 526-1555 local 1759/1707/1727 or 521-0919 for reservations, or e-mail bookings@bayviewparkhotel.com. Bayview Park Hotel is located at 1118 Roxas Boulevard corner UN Avenue, Manila.

Grand takeoff for Nestlé Koko Krunch Jets Academy

THE KIDS CAME IN DROVES AND THEIR EXcitement levels scaled new heights. The second weekend of 2007 saw kids trooping to the Market! Market! to join in the fun of Nestle Koko Krunch Jets Academy.

Adventure was the order of the day as kids hopped from booth to booth, plunging into the exhilarating activities. Among the favorite booths was Chip's Air Escape-a Zip Line jump that felt like jumping from a real plane! This is where the kids used a zip line and crossed from one place to another. Another bestseller was Captain Stars Flight Simulator, the ultimate pilot trainee's challenge, which saw the kids flying the simulator across a "dangerous" flight course. There was an area for the trainees to practice their flying skills through the use of the different jet gliders. Of course, there was Koko's Airchase, where kids must fly through the labyrinth flight course, pass the obstacles; go against enemy choppers until they reach the exit. The obstacle course was like a maze or labyrinth for the trainees to "fly" through wearing a jet costume jumper. Finally, the kids capped their experience and got the "stamp" of being a certified Koko Jet pilot by having their pictures taken in their pilot suits.

Parent-child bonding moments were seen everywhere. The young ones got the ultimate high from the stunt planes they found in the Nestle Breakfast Cereals medium pack-Koko Krunch, Honey Stars, Milo Breakfast Cereals, Cookie Crisp, Snowflakes and Trix. It was a blast seeing dads and kids collecting all six stunt planes and learning how to be a certified Koko ace pilot.

At 4 p.m., the main program started with hosts Bettina Carlos and Sam Concepcion welcoming the kids. Then they plunged into the Jets Game Relay. Youthful TV star Sam Concepcion rendered upbeat song numbers in between the exciting Air Powered Jets Race and Koko Air Chase. Of course, there were several raffle prizes for everyone. Overall, it was a hands-down Jetstacular experience!

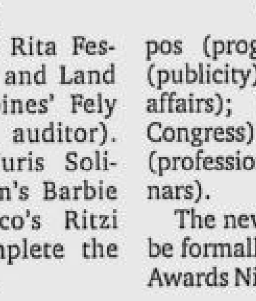
Nestle Koko Krunch Jets Academy was made possible by Nestle Breakfast Cereals in partnership with Market! Market! Co-sponsors for that weekend of adventure were Nestle Fresh Milk, Metro Gaisano, Epson Philippines, Kevin's Toy Shop and Netopia.

GLOBE ONE WITH TAYTAY TODA

Globe Telecom proves its commitment to help build communities as it recently partnered with the municipality of Taytay and its biggest network of tricycle operators and drivers association (Toda), the Nagkakaisang Samahan ng mga Magtatraysikel sa Taytay Rizal Inc. (Nagkaisa Federation) for a livelihood program that will benefit not only the tricycle drivers and their families but also the different sectors in the community. Aside from providing the Nagkaisa uniform vests and 'tarapals', drivers were also given subdealership of Globe and Touch Mobile (TM) products and services like prepaid SIMs, call cards, and Autoload-MAX Prepaid Loads as additional source of income. Globe also provided their family members with livelihood seminars through its corporate social responsibility (CSR) program Bridging Communities (Globe BridgeCom) in order to promote starting small business. One of the community-based enterprise development seminars that was offered focused on beauty and wellness business. Shown is Taytay Mayor George Ricardo 'Joric' Gacula II (4th from left) sealing the partnership with Globe representative Benjamin Garcia, from the sales division of consumer business group (2nd from left), while Globe's Mel Vergel de Dios, Taytay Councilor Regie Gonzaga, and Nagkaisa Federation president Carlos Garcia look on.

PRSP announces 2007-2008 officers

THE PUBLIC RELATIONS Society of the Philippines (PRSP), in the recently concluded organizational meeting of its board of directors, has announced its new set of officers for 2007-2008. Elected as president is GMA Network's Butch Raquel, APR, while ESA Consultation's Ed Alcaraz, APR and San Miguel's Mon Santiago assume the VP for internal and VP for external posts respectively.



RAQUEL

Other newly elected PRSP officers are Total's Malou Espina (secretary), Asian Development Bank's Rita Festin, APR (treasurer) and Land Bank of the Philippines' Fely Rosales (internal auditor). Malacañang Usec Juris Soliman, Manila Bulletin's Barbie Atienza and Meralco's Ritzi Ronquillo, APR complete the board's composition.

Immediate past PRSP president Milen de Quiros of Full Circle Communications is ex officio director. Advisers to the board are past presidents Maximo Edralin, APR, Elpi Cuna, APR, Honesto Isleta, APR and Charlie Agatep, APR.

Furthermore, PRSP has also named its new roster of committee heads-Butch Raquel (accreditation and ethics); Juris Soliman (Anvil Awards); Rita Festin (finance), Malou Espina (membership); Milen de Quiros and Globe Telecom's Jones Campos (program); Mon Santiago (publicity); Fely Rosales (student affairs); Barbie Atienza (PR Congress); and Ritzi Ronquillo (professional development seminars).

The newly elected officers will be formally inducted at the Anvil Awards Night scheduled Feb. 23.

WORRY-FREE LIVING

Yvonne Yuchengco (center), president of Malayan Insurance Company Inc, cuts the ceremonial ribbon to formally open eWealth Universal Marketing, the first Internet-based marketing company that handles prepaid insurance card in the country. Based at the Aurora Tower, Araneta Center in Cubao, Quezon City, the company initially offers eProtect, the first prepaid accidental reimbursement insurance which provides policyholders of worry-free living. Flanking Yuchengco are multi-awarded insurance experts Steve S. Sy (left), the eWealth chair of the board, and Serafin Cu Jr, eWealth president.

eWEALTH
UNIVERSAL MARKETING

ROSEWHITE JOINS 1ST INTERNATIONAL RAMADAN FAIR

From Oct. 21 to 26, 2006, RoseWhite Skin Care Regimen joined the 1st International Ramadan Fair held at the Clamshell 1 in Intramuros, Manila.

As part of RoseWhite's support for the Muslim Community and the promotion of halal beauty products, it hosted a special talk show for Muslim women during the fourth day of the affair. Talk show discussions were all about how women could preserve the youth and health of their skin. Host Mrs Globe 1st runner-up and RoseWhite spokesperson Maricarl Tolosa-Cabel gave her personal tips on how to look and feel great no matter your age. The beauty queen also interviewed RoseWhite's trade marketing specialist Cherry Cabanilla, who gave an informal talk on how the RoseWhite Skin Care Regimen effectively turns back the clock on a mature woman's face. The beauty discussion ended with lucky participants winning RoseWhite Skin Care Sets after joining the event's 'Spin-a-Beauty Wheel' 'roleta', giving them a sample of ageless allure. RoseWhite also gave a 25% discount on all its beauty products during the entire trade fair.

Legarda '57 Golden Jubilee

THE ORGANIZING COMMITTEE OF THE LEGARda Elementary School Batch 1957 will hold the grand reunion on March 3 at the auditorium of the Legarda Elementary School in Sampaloc, Manila. Activities include mass, exhibits, a tour of Legarda, musical program, games, surprises and a buffet dinner to be hosted by class valedictorian Rogelio Batarra. For more details, call Nelia Luna del Rosario (749-6013), Loreto Zarate Francia (941-8865) and Dolly Olan (749-6495)

e-Services Philippines 2007

THE e-SERVICES PHILIPPINES (ESP) 2007 CONference and exhibition will take place Feb. 15 and 16, at the Edsa Shangri-La Hotel in Mandaluyong City. Now on its 7th year, the ESP conference and exhibition has been hailed as an important IT and IT-enabled services (Ites) outsourcing show in the region. For the past six years, the event has served to promote the Philippines as a preferred venue for IT outsourcing by attracting foreign investors and global trade missions. Last year's event generated at least $23.5 million in new contracts. The 2007 event will also be the first edition of the conference and exhibition that Center for Trade Expositions and Missions (Citem) is aggressively promoting in Asia.

Ford Day 2007: Saving the earth, saving lives

RIGHT ON THE HEELS OF THE REcent signing of the Biofuels Bill into law by President Arroyo and the appeal by East Asian leaders during the recent Asean Summit to promote the use of biofuels, comes the annual Ford Day event that trains the spotlight on Ford's flex fuel vehicles (FFV).

Open to the public, Ford Day 2007 will be held on Saturday, Jan. 27, from 10 a.m. to 7 p.m. at The Fort Open Grounds in Taguig wherein Ford's FFVs will be highlighted, and various exciting activities will give families a different weekend gimmick. The theme for this year's Ford Day is "Earth Day 2007: Save Lives, Save Earth."

This Ford Day is the first time that two of the auto giant's advocacies -caring for the environment and road safety-are combined and showcased in one event. Ford leads the industry on both, with the launching of the Road Safety program in 2004, and the Flex Fuel Vehicle or FFV program in 2006.

"Ford definitely leads the industry in terms of developing cleaner, safer and more energy efficient vehicles. Our Ford Focus FFV is a true example of our commitment to our advocacy for the environment, said Richard Baker, president of Ford Group Philippines. "We wanted to drive our eco messages across via this fun-filled activity for the family-targeting not only adults, but children as well. Ford wants to tap the next generation of leaders to think 'green' and care for the environment, starting with the type of cars they drive and the fuel they use."

Ford's stable of environment-friendly cars include the Ford Focus FFV E-20 and Ford Ranger Biodiesel B-5.

Baker added: "We are also recognizing today the 2007 Ford Road Safety Youth Council officers, because we believe that we need to get the youth involved in our drive for a safer world. Many young people have been involved in road accidents due to drunk driving or aggressiveness on the road. We need to reach out to them today and get them involved in our road safety initiatives, so they can also influence their peers in making our roads safer."

This is Baker's first ever Ford Day activity, being newly installed as president of Ford Group Philippines starting January 1 this year.

A sneak peek at what's in store at the Ford Day 2007 include the following activities:

- Eco-Driven Adventure-sure to be a hit with guests wherein players have to answer the crossword puzzle to get clues in getting to random pit stops until they finish all the stages. Champions await cool gift certificates and giveaways from Ford.
- Kiddie art activities such as on-the-spot collage making and drawing contests
- Focus Victory Lap RC Racing
- Kiddie movie marathon and storytelling veered toward environmental themes - fun, interactive activities for kids while helping them learn and develop their sense of concern for the environment.

Moreover, Ford continues to challenge and test students from schools that have undergone the Ford Responsibility In Driver Education (Ride) program via a friendly 2nd Ride Quiz Bee which will be held on the same day. An awarding ceremony will also be held to recognize the two winning schools of Ford's Road Safety Interschool Project competition.

The Ford Day will also be the venue for the launching of the first ever Philippine Solar Car, which taps major sponsors like Pilipinas Shell, San Miguel and Philippine Airlines in the bid to produce a solar car. De La Salle University is the academic partner institution and is the lead proponent for the production of the solar car. Ford is supporting the project via marketing and promotional activities.

Other activities include the induction of the 2007 Ford Road Safety Youth Council officers, driving lessons for the teens, vehicle displays and test drives of the newly-launched Ford SUVs, and live band performances from Unity and Fat Sessions will certainly lend a fun and intense-filled road safety-centered, eco-friendly day.

The Ford mascot, clowns, face and henna painters will also add color to the festivities as guests get to bring home raffle prizes and tokens from Ford.

Ford Day 2007 was made possible through its tie up partners Pilipinas Shell, Tuason Racing School (TRS) and Automobile Association of the Philippines (AAP).

BCDA HAS NEW CHAIR

Business executive and academician Aloysius R. Santos has formally taken his post as chair of the Bases Conversion Development Authority (BCDA). President Gloria Macapagal-Arroyo (center) administers the oath on Santos, who brings to the state-run firm more than 20 years of experience as business administrator and professor-lecturer in the country's leading universities. He was accompanied to the Palace for the oath-taking rite by wife Therese (beside the President), children Richard, Michelle and Marielle, and Judge Jansen Rodriguez (extreme left).

NEW MOPC OFFICERS ELECTED

The Manila Overseas Press Club (MOPC) Board of Governors elected its new batch of officers for 2007, with Stargate Media Corp. CEO and People Asia magazine publisher Jose Manuel Romualdez was elected president. BizNews Asia publisher Antonio Lopez was elected chair with veteran columnist Emil Jurado as vice president; Radio Mindanao Network's Eric Canoy as corporate secretary and Asiaworld president Nelia Gonzales as treasurer. In photo are (seated from left) Michael Clancy of the Philippine Business Leaders Forum; Gonzales, Lopez, Romualdez, Jurado and Canoy; (standing from left) Wen Hui Daily bureau chief Xiaoyang Xia; Karl Robert Wilson of the Agence France Presse; Butch Racquel of GMA Channel 7; Maloli Espinosa of ABS-CBN; Meralco's Elpi Cuna Jr.; Philippine Airlines VP for corporate communications Rolando Estabillo; Edward King of the Philippine Games and Amusement Corp; Antonio Seva of AD Seva and Associates; and Philippine Postal Corp postmaster general and former press secretary Hector Villanueva.

GREEN CHURCH SUPPORTERS THANK RII BUILDERS

Church
Hope

Fr. Ben Beltran, SVD, of the Parish of the Risen Christ in the Smokey Mountain resettlement in Tondo, Manila, presents to Reghis Romero II, chair of the RII Builders Inc, a painting depicting hope for former Smokey Mountain garbage scavengers, on behalf of parishioners who have been assisted and provided decent housing and livelihood opportunities. The presentation was made during the launch of the construction of the world's first 'Green Church', dubbed as Church of Hope, in the former Smokey Mountain now known as 'Paradise Heights'. With environment-friendly features such as solar-panel roofing and space for e-Learning and digitized community projects, the church is set to rise on a 2,000 square-meter lot donated by Romero. RII Builders is the government's private sector partner in the Smokey Mountain Development and Reclamation Project which produced 21-medium-rise residential buildings for some 2,520 families in the area. For more information and offers to help the Church of Hope, please log on to www.prcsmokey-mt.org.

HSBC, LBC FORGE PARTNERSHIP

LBC
HSBC
RACT SIG
mber 15, 20
dg, Makati

HSBC and LBC recently signed a memorandum of agreement last Nov. 15, accrediting all LBC Branches nationwide to accept HSBC Credit Card and HSBC Loan Payments from their customers. Present were (from left) Noel B. Atintar - chief financial officer, LBC Express; Janet T. Ong - chief development officer, LBC Express, Martin C. Cook - SVP and head of personal financial services (PFS), HSBC; and Claire Ann T. Yap - SVP PFS business development and support, HSBC.

Career and Admissions Fair 20
Trade Ha

JOBSDB, CWC HOLD CAREER AND ADMISSIONS FAIR

JobsDB Phils Inc (www.jobsdb.com.ph), the premiere Internet recruitment network in Asia, and the Consortium of Women's Colleges, an association of leading ladies' universities, will hold a Career and Admissions Fair on Jan. 25 and 26 at the Mega Trade Hall, SM Megamall. Present during the contract signing last October were (from left): France Jopillo-Sumang, career and placement officer, St. Scholastica's College; Rosa Paragas, associate dean for academic affairs, Miriam College; Jayjay Viray, country manager, JobsDB Philippines Inc; Sr. Ancille Elvena, S.Sp.S, president, College of the Holy Spirit, Manila; and Sr. Gertrude Borres, R.A, president, Assumption College.

Ducks now in SM City Pampanga

DUCKS UNLIMITED, THE brand with international quality standards recently opened its new branch at SM City, Pampanga. The design is minimalist but savvy. Prominent displays in the store are the latest Ducks Unlimited shirts, both for men and women. Opening its first store fifteen years ago, the Kuo family, owners of Ducks Unlimited, decided to ride along golf's rising popularity in the Philippines. With its distinct branding and undeniably high quality products, this enterprising newcomer soon gained position as one of the country's leading retailer of locally-manufactured golf apparel.

It did not take a long time, however, before the Kuo family realized a greater vision for the company. Taking from the company name, Ducks truly became unlimited as it moved out of its niche of selling primarily men's golf wear to become a total fashion store.

Ducks Unlimited has branches in Glorietta 3, all Robinson's malls, Century Park Sheraton Hotel, Festival Supermall, Shopesville-Greenhills, SM-Malls in Marilao-Bulacan, Pampanga, and Southmall, Ali Mall, Landmark, Crossings Department Stores, Rustan's, Harrison Plaza and Mira-Monti Building Buendia.

Clips

AME holds 2nd Camp

TO ADVANCE THE CULTURE OF EXCELLENCE IN marketing education, the Association of Marketing Educators (AME) of the Philippines will be holding the 2nd Conference of Aspiring Marketing Professionals (Camp) on Feb. 12, at the Forum, PICC Complex in Pasay City from 12:30 - 5 p.m. This year's them will be on the "New Wave in Service Marketing." For more details please call (02)634-5664 or (0920) 9072791 and look for Annabelle Payawal.

Learn to Breathe with Buteyko's Method

JOIN THE FREE INTRODUCTORY LECTURE ON "LEARN TO BREATHE WITH Buteyko's Method", with Australian senior Buteyko practitioner Jac Vidgen on Jan. 26, 6:30 to 8:30 p.m. at Bridges Bookstore located at The New V-Mall Greenhills Shopping Center, Greenhills, San Juan. The lecture will focus on health, well being and performance. It is particularly effective for conditions such as asthma, allergies, rhinitis, bronchitis, sleep and anxiety disorders and stress, as well as for strengthening immune function and enhancing sports performance. Hurry and register now, limited slots only. Interested parties may call Goodwill Bookstore Advertising Promotions Office at 895-8684 locals 131 and 133 or Bridges Bookstore at 723-0545.

CHS '67 sponsors film showing

MEMBERS OF THE COLLEGE OF THE HOLY SPIRIT HIGH SCHOOL '67 ARE sponsoring a showing of the film "Night at the Museum" on January 24 at 6:30 p.m. at the Glorietta 4 Cinema 6, Ayala Center, Makati. This showing is for the benefit of the Caring Hands Foundation and the Punlaan School for the Underprivileged as well as projects of the CHS Alumnae Foundation. Major sponsors of the film showing are Globe Telecom, Ayala Land Inc, Intercontinental Manila, Innove Communications Inc, and Philips. Interested parties may call Marienne Villanueva-Pimentel at 722-2936 or Marivic Eustaquio-Anonuevo at 841-5882.

US Working Visa Seminar

TEMPLO & TEMPLO IMMIGRATION CONSULTANTS WITH US LICENSED New York-based lawyer Michael Templo, ESQ is holding a seminar on H1B or Working Visa on Jan. 20, 24, 27, at the 5th floor YL-Finance building V.A. Rufino corner Salcedo St. Legaspi Village Makati from 1 to 4 p.m. Templo will speak on how to find the right job that fits your qualifications, communicate with the right sponsoring-employer, prepare documents, learn application procedures. For registration and other seminar schedules and details, call (02)893-5964, SMS 0917-5380797 or 0917-6082276.

MCS grand alumni homecoming

MALATE CATHOLIC SCHOOL WILL HOLD ITS GRAND ALUMNI HOMECOMING on Feb. 3, Saturday, 3 p.m. at the Jaime Cardinal Sin Gymnasium, Madre Ignacia St., Malate, Manila. The event's theme is MCSLink Come Home@90, where alumni establish their ties once again and trace the corridors of the school they once called home. Arnell Ignacio will host the program with surprise numbers from homegrown talents among them a song number from Ms Faith Cuneta. Jubilarians who are graduates of milestones years - 1957, 1962, 1967, 1972, 1977, 1982, 1987, 1992 and 1997 will be given special recognition. Malateans should call the alumni office at 521-1451 or text at 0917-8910457. You can also e-mail your queries at hyper8148@yahoo.com or malate-alumni-reunion@yahoogroups.com.

Greenwich 'Pizza All You Can' for only P99

START THE YEAR RIGHT WITH "PIZZA-ALL-YOU-CAN" A ONE-OF-A-KIND PIZZA madness from Greenwich. The country's no. 1 pizza chain has cooked up something exciting for pizza lovers of all ages. For only P99++, pizza lover diners can have all the Hawaiian and Pepperoni pizza they could possibly want, when they visit any Greenwich outlet starting Jan. 15, from 11 a.m. to 2 p.m. Enjoy this exciting treat with your favorite bottomless drink for an additional P29. The Greenwich "Pizza-All-You-Can" nationwide promo is available only for dine-in customers from 11 a.m. - 2 p.m. week days from Jan. 15-19, and Jan. 22-26. This special promo is on a limited run so rush to any of over 200 stores nationwide.

Meisic Mall's new year offerings

AT THE HEART OF DIVISORIA IS A NEW HAVEN OF GREAT FINDS AT AMAZingly low, low prices. Newly opened Meisic Mall is the newest talk of the town with its cornucopia of trendy items - housewares, shoes, bags, electronic supplies, office and school supplies, toys and novelty items, cellphone and accessories, home decors, and many more! As added treats, customers are offered to acoustic gigs every Saturday, a singing and acoustic player contests plus a raffle every Sunday until Feb. 11. In Meisic Mall's raffle promo, fabulous prizes are at stake every Sunday, while a hundred thousand pesos awaits the lucky winner in the grand draw, to be held on Feb. 11. Meisic Mall is conveniently located at Reina Regente cor. Felipe Sts., near C.M. Recto, Divisoria.

UPHS68 39th anniversary reunion

UP HIGH SCHOOL CLASS 1968 WILL BE HOLDING A 39TH ANNIVERSARY reunion on Saturday, Feb. 3, at the Lorenzo Room, Albergus Restaurant, Capitol Drive, Old Balara, Q.C. Fee of P500 covers the cost of dinner, band entertainment and jamming with the high school barkada. A short meeting to discuss UPHS68 projects and plans for the UPHS68 Grand Ruby Jubilee Reunion in 2008 with UPHS classmates based in the US, Australia, England and elsewhere, will also be held. For details, contact Alma -0917-834-5550; Cherry -0918-904-9162; or Cesar - 0917-529-4813.

The Legend Villas offers unique guest rooms

THE LEGEND VILLAS, a sprawling 125-room hotel in the heart of Metro Manila, offers unique rooms that can accommodate large groups of guests. Back then, families, friends, students and business colleagues wanting to stay together meant being lumped in one room with just two beds. Now, kids can share a room with their parents while having their own beds. A group of friends can bunk together comfortably. Team members can stay in one room to work conveniently all night on the next day's presentation.

Located in the booming and bustling city of Mandaluyong, The Legend Villas has Family Rooms that can be configured into a one-queen-sized bed for the parents and two single beds for the kids; or into four individual beds for friends or colleagues who need to stay together. Fully air conditioned, the Family Room is 30 sqm in size, has a walk-in closet, a dining and working table, mini bar, telephone, cable TV, separate toilet and bath.

Team Suites, on the other hand, are perfect for team members and business colleagues attending live-in seminars, meetings and conferences. They are also great for buddies doing board reviews or friends who just want to spend the weekend together. This split-level room is 52 sqm in size and has six single beds with individual closets and keys.

Team Suites have a kitchenette for convenient in-room snacking, two telephone units, a refrigerator, two work tables, two toilets and baths. For added convenience, parking is available right outside certain rooms. The spacious Team Suite is also ideal for convention participants or even a wedding entourage.

Aside from the uniquely configured guest rooms, The Legend Villas offers amenities for business and leisure guests. There's an outdoor pool for that refreshing pause and home-style culinary goodness at Lola Maria, the hotel's coffee shop known for its authentic Filipino cuisine. Internet access is available in all rooms while some areas, such as the coffee shop are Wi-Fi connection ready.

100 percent Filipino-owned and Filipino-managed, The Legend Villas abounds in old world charm, genuine Filipino hospitality, warm and efficient service. It's no wonder then why it has become the hotel of choice of families, businessmen, company executives and students.

For inquiries and reservations, call Central Reservations at (632)702-2700 to 04 or e-mail reservations@legendhotels.com.ph. The Legend Villas is located at 60 Pioneer corner Madison Sts, Mandaluyong City.

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BUSINESS

Committed investments in '06 hit ₱274B

DTI says registered projects are expected to create 135,069 jobs

By Ronnel W. Domingo

ATTACHED AGENCIES OF THE Department of Trade and Industry reported that a total of P274 billion in investments were committed last year, an increase of about 18.6 percent from the P231 billion registered in 2005.

Trade Secretary Peter B. Favila said the amount posted in 2006 was 8 percent higher than the target of P254 billion for the year.

The goal was based on the government's target of growing the economy by 10 percent a year.

Once operational, "the 694 projects registered with the Board of Investments and the Philippine Economic Zone Authority are expected to create a total of 135,069 jobs," Favila said. "Job generation in 2006 grew by 14.3 percent from the 118,141 jobs promised in 2005."

The surge in investments, Favila added, "is a reflection of the investors' confidence, brought about by the improved fiscal position of the country and the enhanced business environment."

The BOI registered 231 projects worth P190 billion—16 percent higher than the P163 billion registered in 2005.

Some of the largest projects listed with the BOI last year were GNPower Ltd.'s P43.9-billion coal-fired power plant; Smart Communications' P33-billion 3G cellular phone system, as well as Globe Telecom's P5.5-billion project.

Peza registered 463 projects worth P84 billion in investments—25 percent higher than the previous year's P67 billion.

In 2006, the biggest Peza-listed ventures were mostly those related to electronics and semiconductors. But there were also Upland Banana Corp.'s P4.6-billion production of cavendish bananas; HSBC's 3-billion business process outsourcing venture; Lepanto Consolidated Mining's P3.27-billion copper project; and San Carlos Bioenergy's P2.25-billion ethanol facility.

With such performance this year, Favila said DTI was raising the investment target to 12 percent a year from the original 10 percent that was adopted two years.

Trade Undersecretary Elmer C. Hernandez, who is also BOI managing head, said the DTI was optimistic that the 2006 performance would be sustained through 2007, due to the expected inflow of capital in the infrastructure, mining, information and communications technology, tourism and health, and wellness sectors.

Hernandez noted the improved sectoral investment performance of infrastructure at 1,648 percent; real estate at 113 percent; agriculture at 541 percent; and information technology services at 78 percent.

He said local investors brought in commitments worth P182 billion, or 67 percent of the 2006 total, while foreign investors accounted for P92 billion.

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BSP's hedging tools trimmed GIR in 2006

By Doris C. Dumlao

THE COUNTRY'S GROSS INTERnational reserves, now at an all-time high of $23 billion, could have been higher had the Bangko Sentral ng Pilipinas refrained from applying its currency hedging tools, according to a Citigroup economist.

In a commentary dated Jan. 8, Citigroup economist Jun Trinidad estimated that the GIR build-up would have exceeded $28 billion if the BSP had not taken out some of the US dollars it bought from the spot foreign currency market.

Trinidad said 2006 was "marked by strong BSP intervention, particularly in the second half, to ease ... the rapid appreciation of the peso owing to strong remittance and investment flows, followed by sterilization of its US dollar purchases."

Sterilization refers to a central bank's effort to mop up excess funds pumped into the economy by an increase in net foreign assets arising from intervention in the spot foreign exchange market and reserve accumulation.

Citing official data, the economist said the BSP had taken out pesos equivalent to $5.98 billion via the foreign exchange swap market as of December last year. The figure represented the BSP's total short (sell) and long (buy) positions in the forwards and futures of foreign currencies against the peso.

A forward contract is an agreement between two parties to buy or sell an asset at a pre-agreed future point in time, while a futures contract is a contract to buy or sell a standardized quantity of commodity or financial instrument at a specified price with delivery set at a specified time in the future.

The economist also said that the BSP's intervention and application of the tiering mechanism that narrowed the onshore-offshore interest rate differential, had restrained nominal peso appreciation to 7.6 percent in 2006.

In real terms, Citigroup estimated an erosion of the effective exchange rate index to 1.7 percent as of November, compared with the index average for 1999-2000, used as a post-currency crisis benchmark.

"As there was no material loss in the real exchange rate, we don't expect any currency curbs from the BSP similar to those recently implemented by the Bank of Thailand to discourage offshore portfolio flows and restrain local currency appreciation," Trinidad said.

A government source privy to the BSP's operations said Citigroup's analysis was correct because if the central bank were to allow the GIR to rise rapidly to $28 billion, it might send the signal that it would like the peso to appreciate sharply. At a GIR level of $28 billion, the official said the peso could jump to as much as 45 to the US dollar.

The GIR, a key indicator of an economy's ability to service its foreign exchange requirements, rose by $4.5 billion, or 24 percent, in 2006 over the end-2005 level of $18.49 billion.

Foreign reserves consist of the BSP's gross foreign currency holdings, gold reserves, foreign investments and special drawing rights from multilateral institutions like the International Monetary Fund.

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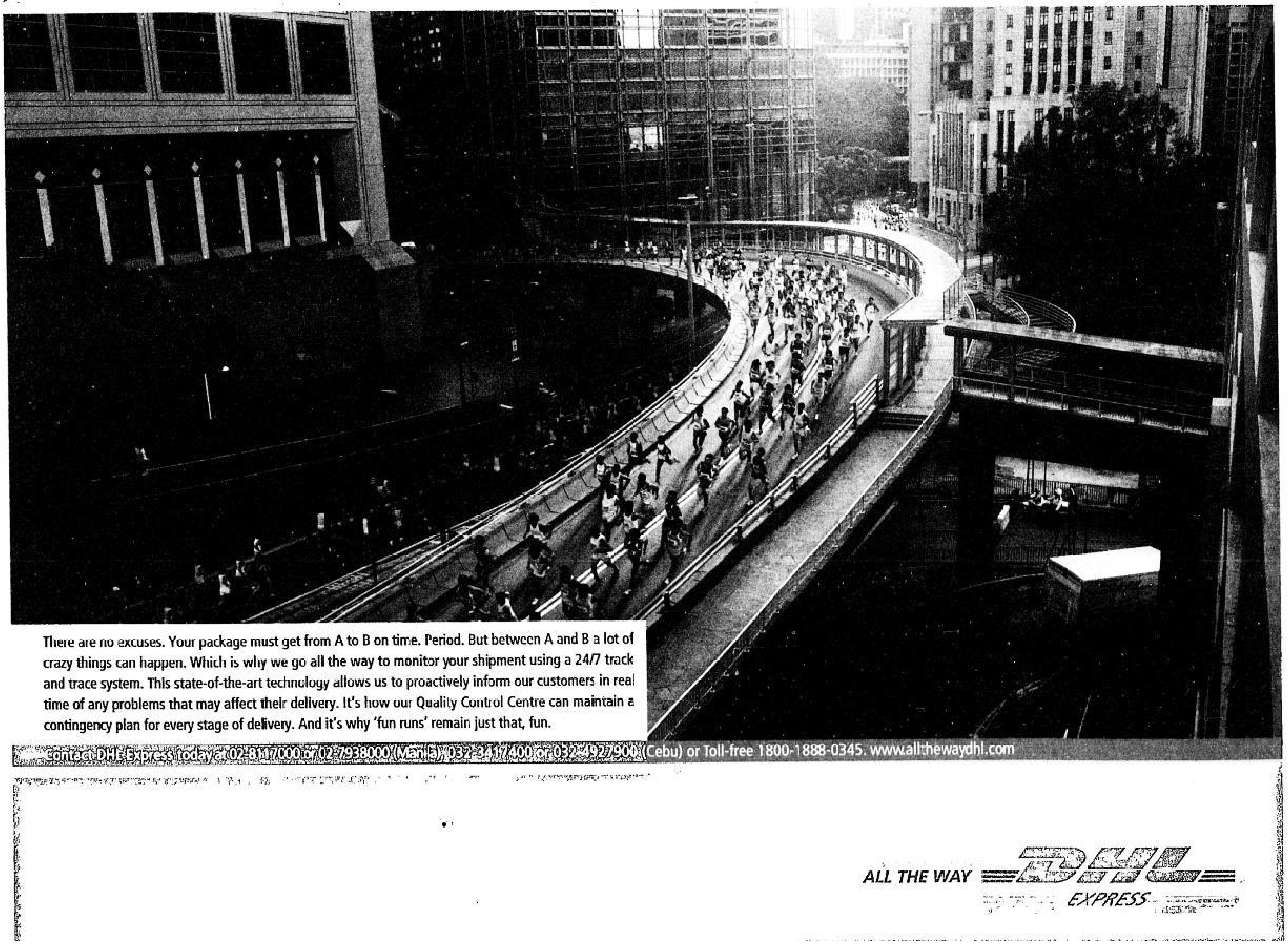

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Private sector scores gains at Asean meet

Philippine business leaders to lead biofuels, franchising committees

By Ronnel W. Domingo

WHILE THE POSTPONEMENT OF THE 12TH Asean (Association of Southeast Asian Nations) Summit and its resumption may have proved to be a blessing for local businesses, especially those based in Cebu, the changed schedule was at first a setback for the private sector.

But the setback did not prevent Filipinos from displaying their leadership capabilities, not only in governance and cultural endeavors, but in business-related pursuits as well.

The Asean Business Advisory Council lost half an hour to spend with the Asean leaders, to whom the group was set to report and give their recommendations on how to realize the Asean Economic Community envisioned by 2015.

Lost 30 minutes

If the summit had pushed through in December, the 30-member Asean BAC had at least an hour to exchange ideas with the leaders over dinner.

But the new schedule from Jan. 10-15 gave the group only half an hour to meet with the heads of state and of government.

Each of the 10 Asean members has three representatives in Asean BAC.

Big improvement

For the Philippines, they are Jose Concepcion Jr. (who chaired the group for two years until the 12th summit was over) Miguel Varela and Donald G. Dee—all three are leading members of the Philippine Chamber of Commerce and Industry.

"Thirty minutes is actually a big improvement from the 10 minutes the Asean BAC was given during the 11th summit held in Kuala Lumpur in December 2005," an Asean BAC staff member tells the INQUIRER.

"Half of those 10 minutes were actually spent for introductions," he says. "The report and recommendations, and other matters the business leaders wanted to raise with the leaders had to be squeezed in during the remaining five minutes."

Still, limited time with the top decision-makers in the region provided shining moments, especially for Philippine business sector, which was given crucial roles in continuing efforts to integrate 10 disparate economies that include Singapore—one of the most advanced in the world—and Myanmar—one of those trailing in the development scale.

Two committees

During consultations with the Asean leaders, two committees were formed to take efforts in areas that were important for the region, both of which were to.be led by Filipinos.

One was to be engaged in studying the large-scale use of alternative sources of energy like biodiesel that uses castor oil or extract from jatropha curcas, popularly known as tuba-tuba.

Dee was assigned to head the group, which he says was a recognition of the Philippines' regional leadership in research—and probably development as well—in the field of biofuels.

Promotion of biofuels had been one of the most significant issues discussed in Cebu during the summit.

Asean and its six dialog partners—China, Japan, South Ko-

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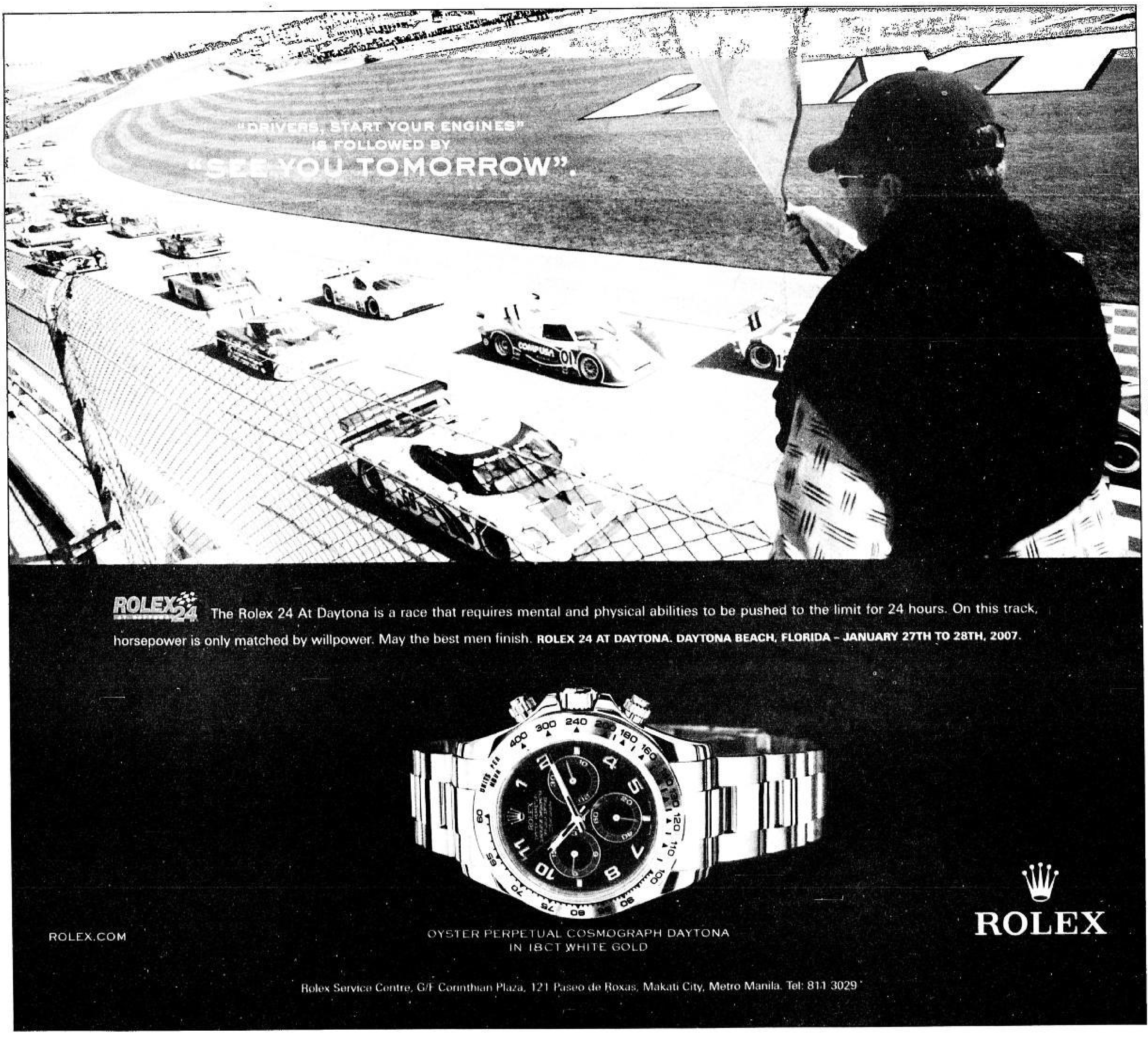
THE ASEAN Summit ended with Philippine leaders chairing two new regional committees. INQUIRER PHOTO



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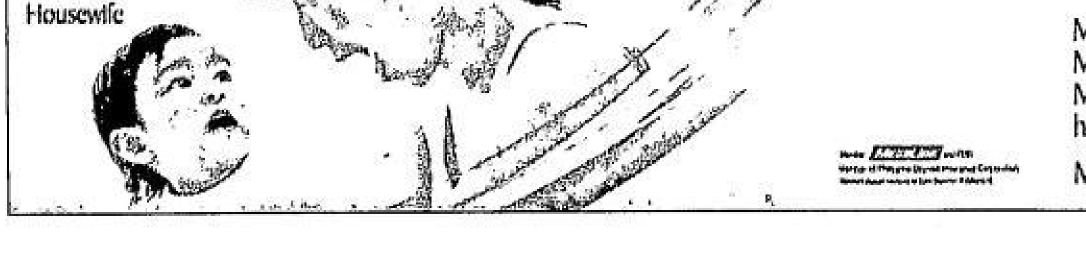

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BOSCH AND Tesda sign an agreement to improve Filipinos' automotive skills. At the signing were (from left) Mustafa Sed, GM of Bosch Automotive aftermarket division, Michael Goh, GM of Bosch Southeast Asia aftersales service and diagnostics, Roland Odenthal, Bosch president and managing director, Ernesto Beltran, executive director of Tesda and directors Sanico and Capio of Tesda.

Bosch, Tesda join hands to advance tech skills

By Daxim L. Lucas

ROBERT BOSCH INC., THE PHILIPPINE FLAGship of Robert Bosch GmbH (Germany), and the Technical Education and Skills Development Authority (TESDA) signed a memorandum of agreement that formally engages both organizations in providing advanced automotive technology courses for skilled Filipino mechanics and technicians.

The MOA was formally entered into by Bosch president and managing director Roland Odenthal, and TESDA director general Augusto Syjuco recently in Makati City.

As part of the agreement, Bosch will provide the government agency with international standard training modules, which aims to enhance the local auto service industry through the proper education of its skilled workforce.

Skills training

To address the increasing need for more efficient transportation in the Philippines and Asia, Odenthal said that workshops "must be equipped with the proper equipment, service technology and most importantly, skilled personnel."

Through TESDA's network of some 120 schools and training institutions in the country, the program also provides access for workshop owners and operators to receive the same certificate courses that are recognized in over 12,000 workshops in the Bosch service network worldwide.

"Not only will they (workshop owners) be able to serve a wide variety of private and commercial vehicles," Odenthal said, "They will also benefit by gaining adequate knowledge, work competence, and therefore expand their livelihood opportunities."

The growing demand for more complex vehicle services is attributed to advanced components and systems now fitted into most new cars.

Repair services

To date, the Philippine auto service market identifies the need for vehicle diagnostics and repair service that would match increasingly complicated vehicle systems.

Courses to be offered under the Bosch-Tesda program are gasoline and diesel fuel injection technology as well as the calibration and repair of electronically controlled diesel injection pumps, which is exclusive to Bosch in the Philippines.

Bosch also now provides certificate courses at the Philippine Auto Technical Training Center (PATTC) located at its service center in Kamagong St., San Antonio Village, Makati.

The institute offers practical training on both diesel and gasoline injections, vehicle electrics and electronics, and brake systems.

The facility is equipped with the latest in automotive diagnostics and tools to ensure that participants "are provided with an aesthetic and thorough understanding, as well as skills and knowledge to perform quality service in step with the latest technology," according to Jose Yao, the company's manager for automotive after-market service and training.

Special courses

He explained that diesel injection and gasoline injection training courses enable participants to understand the construction and operation principles, assembly, diagnosis and repair of gasoline and diesel injection systems.

The vehicle electrics and electronics training program, on the other hand, allows trainees to be acquainted with basic measuring techniques and the different application types of oscilloscope patterns, making them fit to work on specific functions and effects of the construction parts.

Finally, the brake system course provides fundamental knowledge on the conventional and anti-lock braking system, and specialization in diagnosis, testing and repair of the modern electronic brake safety systems.

Some 75 percent of the country's diesel vehicles run on Bosch fuel systems, while a significant majority also run on Bosch gasoline systems.

Trainees who graduate from courses offered at the PATTC receive Bosch technician certificates after passing the requisite certification exams.

Top technicians

Since February 2006, the training center has produced certified and skilled Bosch system technicians and Bosch diesel technicians who are accredited in the Bosch organization worldwide.

Bosch ended fiscal 2006 as the company with the widest product range in the Philippine after market, translating into a sustained sales level for the company's auto group.

The company's product offering consists of over 50,000 part numbers and 10 core product lines, in which it excels in the fields of sparkplugs, wiper blades, and gasoline and diesel systems.

Other Bosch products include diagnostic systems, body electronics, braking systems and filters.

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The innovator's dilemma

MAPPING THE FUTURE

Niceto S. Poblador

"THE INNOVATOR'S DILEMMA" is the title of a best-selling book by Clayton Christensen, a professor at the Harvard Business School.

Christensen defines two types of innovations: Sustaining innovations are those that build upon and enhance the value of existing technologies.

Disruptive innovations, on the other hand, are major deviations from the technologies that are currently in place.

According to Christensen, disruptive innovations tend to reduce the value of existing technologies.

In the context of organizations, all innovations are disruptive to a degree.

Any change in the way things are routinely done at the office, in the field, or on the shop floor will, momentarily at least, disrupt operations.

The more substantial the change, for example, a major overhaul in the way customer orders and deliveries are handled, the longer the learning period and the greater the disruption in operations.

Any interruption of operations and the unavoidable decline in production arising from change is something that most organizations seek to avoid.

This is a major reason why managers and employees are loathe to innovate. While creative and innovative ideas are often conceived at all levels of the organization, few are ultimately implemented.

This is so not only because of the expected decline in production, but for the uncertainty that it will create.

As a rule, managers and employees are rewarded for their contribution to current production. Performance evaluation and compensation systems are typically based on metrics that reflect immediate and measurable contribution to output, and ultimately to the bottom line.

Seldom are employees rewarded for their innovative ideas and creative ways of doing things. While innovative moves in response to changing circumstances potentially enhance the firm's capacity to create value in the future, they are not immediately reflected in the firms' profit-and-loss statements and market caps.

They are typically ignored in the annual corporate ritual known as PER, or Performance Evaluation and Review.

While most managers and employees are aware of the need for change, they are reluctant to recommend, much less, to implement change. This paradox reflects the classic "incentive problem" in organizations.

As agents acting on behalf of their employers, managers and employees are reluctant to assume the risks typically associated with the implementation of change in organizations.

Empowering them, by itself, does not ensure that innovation will take place in organizations. Employees must be rewarded for their initiatives in coming up with creative ideas and implementing changes in the work place. Conceiving and implementing change must be made a part of their job descriptions.

Yet another major reason for the reluctance of managers and employees to initiate change in their organizations are the cumbersome control mechanisms and administrative procedures that are firmly in place in most business organizations today.

Intended to ensure that things are "done right," they also have the undesirable effect of maintaining the status quo in the face of rapid change.

It is truly ironic that while many progressive managers today are aware of the need to continuously change and innovate in order to create shareholder value over the long haul, employees are not rewarded—or worse, are penalized—for doing so.

(The article reflects the personal opinion of the author and does not reflect the official stand of the Management Association of the Philippines. The author is an active academic and a knowledge management consultant. Feedback at mapsec@globenet.com.ph)

Garage ingenuity

A LEADER'S WAY

John C. Maxwell

GARAGE (NOUN) 1. A DIMLY lit cave for cars 2. A haven for tools, trash bags and unused sports equipment 3. A dingy and unkempt domain of bicycles and lawn mowers 4. A hotbed of creativity and invention.

In addition to sheltering automobiles, garages have housed some of the greatest technological inventions of the modern era and have birthed an assortment of widely popular rock 'n' roll bands.

If you're sitting at a computer, you've bumped into the products of garage-inspired genius.

Steve Jobs and Steve Wozniak constructed the first Apple computer in a garage. HP can trace its corporate history back to a garage where Bill Hewlett and David Packard designed the oscillator.

Google founders Sergei Brin and Larry Page took to the garage when building their search engine. You Tube can claim the garage as its place of origin, too.

Before performing in sold-out auditoriums, rock groups Buddy Holly and the Crickets, Nirvana, and Metallica jammed out in junk-filled garages.

So many musical artists began their careers in garages that "garage rock" has become a recognized genre. Apple has even developed a software suite named GarageBand to help amateur musicians produce their work.

Inspiration

Do exhaust fumes fuel creativity and ingenuity or can lessons be learned from garage success stories? Featured on CIO.com, John Baldoni's article "Where's Your Garage?" encourages leaders to make space for invention with the following suggestions:

Build your own garage. Clear out space to exercise your creativity. Construct an area to spark original thinking and sound out your ideas. It may be a home office, the corner table of a local coffee shop, or an out-of-the-way conference room.

The location isn't as important as long as you're able to carve out the intellectual space to look at your work from a fresh angle.

As Baldoni writes, "The point is to focus your energy on thinking creatively about your business. What occurs may be an idea for a breakthrough product, or it may be a simple improvement that saves customers time and money."

Building your garage may not spark an epic invention, but time in the garage can expose flaws in established patterns of thought, yield insights for systems enhancements, or generate original ideas for meeting complex challenges.

Risk-taking

Allow risk in your garage. Dare to dream in the garage. Question long-held assumptions, and experiment with alternate ways of solving-problems. Take comfort in the value of discarded ideas.

Remember, the words of Thomas Edison: "I have not failed. I've just found 10,000 ways that won't work." When you enter the garage, feel the freedom to explore new terrain in your thinking.

Invite your boss into the garage. When you've landed upon a great idea and given shape to it, the next step is to share it with others. Introduce your concepts by inviting friends and family to your garage.

Once you've had their feedback, revise or touch up the idea. Then, you'll be ready to bring your boss to the garage. Give your boss the opportunity to wrap his or her hands around your invention.

Going the extra mile to familiarize your boss with your work will increase the likelihood of its application.

Bring your customer into the garage. "Customers can be your allies in innovation," writes John Baldoni.

Invite them into your creative sphere and allow them to interact with your ideas. Why not have your end users pilot a new concept before developing it? Better to abort an innovation in the garage than to sink energy and costs into an unwanted product or service.

To read the complete text of John Baldoni's "Where's Your Garage?" visit http://www.cio.com/leadership/leadership/baldoni/column.html?ID=26323

For information on John Maxwell's in-house or public leadership or teamwork workshops, please email us at maxwell @inspire.ph or call 813-2049/2732 and ask for Jesi or Bing. Text MAXWELL ON to 4632 (Smart) to get daily SMS leadership insights from John Maxwell. God bless!

MOVEMENTS

SAP names Global-SME president

TO FUEL ITS GROWING BUSINESS AMONG SMALL AND MIDSIZE ENTERprises (SMEs), SAP announced that it has appointed Hans-Peter Klaey as president of Global SME, a new organizational unit overseeing sales, marketing, operations and alignment of resources dedicated to serving small and midsize customers.

The appointment provides additional managerial focus and support to SAP's SME efforts, and reflects the evolution of SAP's go-to-market model to serve customers in increasing numbers through a multi-channel approach.

Klaey will report to Léo Apotheker, president, Customer Solutions and Operations, and member of the SAP AG Executive Board.

Increasing its presence among small and midsize enterprises is a key driver of ongoing growth and a significant area of strategic investment for SAP.

With SMEs currently accounting for approximately 65 percent of its total customer base, SAP is aggressively expanding its footprint in the segment by building its delivery channels and the world's largest portfolio of business management software designed specifically to meet the market, industry and resource requirements of small and midsize businesses.

In his new role, Klaey will collaborate with global and regional management and sales organizations to accelerate SAP's SME efforts, including developing an integrated go-to-market strategy, with targeted programs for direct and indirect channels, and innovations in marketing and customer engagement for SMEs.

Citibank names new director

Citibank Phils. has announced the appointment of Judith Go as Director for its Wealth Management business in the country.

In her new role, Go will also be part of the bank's Senior Management Team.

Go joined Citibank Phils. in 1984 and over the last 22 years, has assumed various roles in the retail banking business covering sales, Citigold wealth management services, and branch business management.

Her most recent assignment was branch head for Cebu and sales director for southern Philippines.

Go is a graduate of the University of San Carlos—Summa Cum Laude and is a certified public accountant.

Private sector scores gains at Asean meet

From page B2-1

rea, India, Australia and New Zealand—agreed to do so during the 2nd East Asia Summit held Jan. 15.

Another committee was formed to tackle the development of franchising within Asean.

Franchising leader

Samie Lim, newly elected president of PCCI, was named head of the committee.

It was Lim who discussed during the Asean Business and Investments Summit held during the first leg of the Asean Summit last December the region's opportunities in franchising and the potential of this business model to push Asean toward economic integration.

"I was designated to head the committee, but I answer to a director (a member of Asean BAC) who is a Malaysian," Lim says. "That means we are working with the best because Malaysia is considered in the region as very advanced in the field of franchising."

Both Dee and Lim say they expected their respective groups to start hard work in the next two months.

During the dialogue with leaders, Asean BAC urged them to push for a "real meaningful partnership" between the government and private sector in working toward a common market by 2015.

Jose Concepcion Jr., who presided over the council until the rotating chairmanship passed on to Singapore last Jan. 14, says the private sector supports the target of 2015 for the integration.

But Concepcion says that since most industries in member countries are not ready for a single market economy, support from and regular consultations with the governments are needed.

"We are the engine of change, but sometimes there is no meaningful consultation [between the government and private sector]," Concepcion says. "(However), I'm very confident that our dialog would have positive results; we have been talking of economic integration for the last 20 years."

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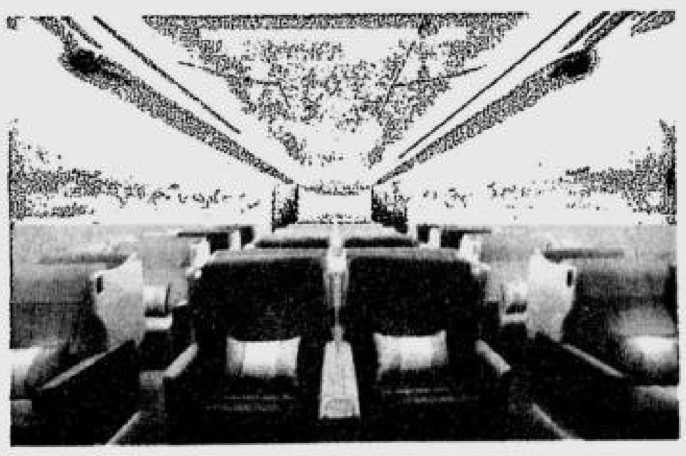

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Steadfast stewardship for TOYM awardee and eTelecare GM in 2007

eTelecare Global Solutions, the world's most awarded call center company, moves in 2007 with a bag of sterling achievements and fresh inspirations for future growth.

This Philippine-grown company, last mid December, yielded in the person of Benedict C. Hernandez, the first Philippine general manager of a call center company to be named among the distinguished The Outstanding Young Men (TOYM) of 2006. In TOYM's 48 years, Hernandez is only the sixth recipient of the honor for Business Leadership.

Reputable judges for the awards program lauded Hernandez's leadership of eTelecare, a pioneering Philippine call center company that now counts 54 awards, mostly given by US-based trade associations, publications and firms focusing on business trends. Its Philippine citations are equally lustrous, such as the 2005 Employer of the Year award given eTelecare by the Personnel Management Association of the Philippines.

Hernandez, a magna cum laude psychology graduate of UP and a Most Outstanding Graduate Student of the same university, has interestingly already gained several "firsts" and "youngest" citations in his career. He was the youngest GM of a call center company when he joined eTelecare. Prior to eTelecare, he was youngest vice president of Nextel Philippines at age 27, and youngest supervisor and then manager at Smart Communications at age 22. At 19, he was also youngest faculty member of the UP Psychology Department.

President Gloria Macapagal Arroyo with TOYM awardee Benedict Hernandez together with his family

One may think that Hernandez is twin to such distinctions. But as things turned out, the prestigious citation by the Philippine Jaycees as The Outstanding Young Men for 2006, still came unexpectedly.

"My pursuit to lead our company to world class performance is never really fueled by wanting to gain recognition or awards. It is driven by my passion to prove that Filipinos can be the best and the brightest as global knowledge workers. Nevertheless, awards such as TOYM are still powerful encouragement and confidence-building for individuals like myself." Hernandez states.

It developed a company mantra: investing to outperform. This is a commitment that is breathed in and out in all aspects of the company operations. eTelecare invests in choosing the best talent, in providing best-in-class training and support to enable its employees to be the best in te industry.

eTelecare professionals are empowered to make vital company decisions. As a result, they own up to their actions and develop a good sense of corporate ownership. "At eTelecare, we build a culture where employees would say 'this is my company and I can make a difference,'" states Hernandez.

In 2003, a different twist took place in its corporate life. While most corporate buys involved a Philippine outfit being bought by an overseas company, eTelecares gave a different story. It bought .an American company, the Arizona-based Phase 2 Solutions. eTelecare then grew from being a pure offshore service provider to one that offers a wider choice of onshore and offshore services.

Today the seven-year-old, Philippine-based eTelecare counts over 10,000 employees and 12 call centers globally.Its roster of 7,000 employees, spread over four different centers (Makati, Libis, Alabang and Cebu) in the Philippines continues to grow at a rapid pace.

With its unique corporate culture, eTelecare Global Solutions delivers a brand of service for its clientele that includes Fortune 500 companies. eTelecare Global Solutions provides innovative customer care, technical support, sales, email and chat solutions for market-leading companies in the telecommunications, high technology, financial services, travel, healthcare and other industries. It renders value to its clients by focusing on quality and performance inevitably reducing clients' operational costs.

Reinforced by sweet success and the increasing figures of local employment for the youth by the call center industry, Hernandez has moved logically onto the sphere of industry development while carrying eTelecare's banner.

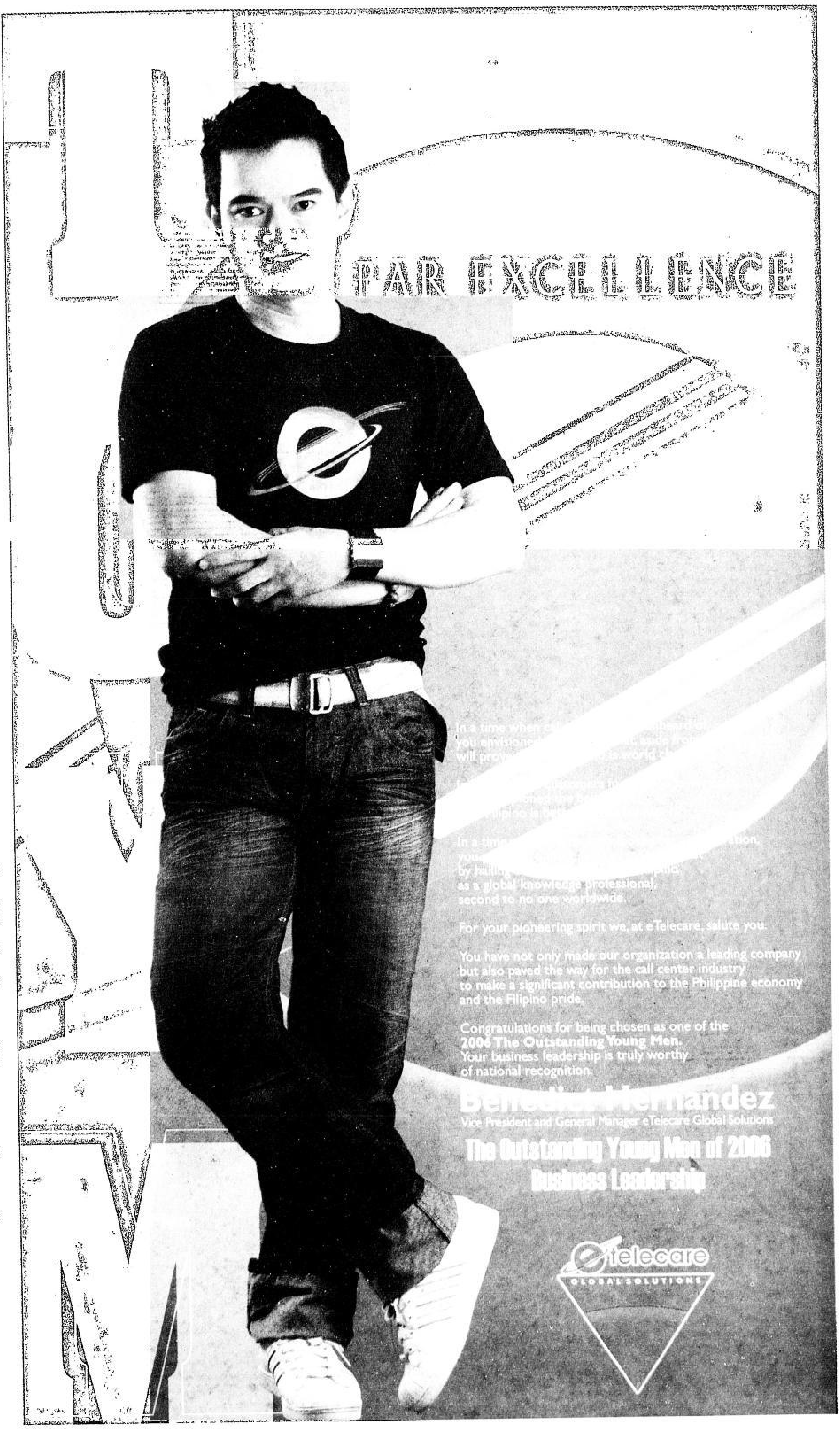
Hernandez is a founding member and the first elected chairman of the Contact Center Association of the Philippines (CCAP) that grew to 30 member-companies in 4 years. With CCAP, the industry responds to challenges and sets up linkages with other sectors such as government and the academe to push forward the country's advantages as host of call center services.

Employing over 170,000 contact center professionals, the industry was responsible for revenue of about $3Billion in 2006 and fuels growth in related sectors as real estate, food and retail.

For now, Hernandez believes that the key to continued growth both for eTelecare and the industry is steadfast stewardship.

"Despite the amazing growth and success reaped by our industry, the work has really just begun. We need to continue this task of taking this industry to it fullest potential. The fruits of our collective effort are not only to be counted by the hundreds of thousands of jobs or billions of dollars in revenues we will generate. By pursuing global excellence, we likewise help shore up national pride and confidence in ourselves being Filipinos," declares Hernandez.

President Gloria Macapagal Arroyo awards eTelecare Global Solutions General Manager, Benedict Hernandez, as one of The Outstanding Young Men (TOYM) for 2006 for the Business Leadership category



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Your business leadership is truly worthy
of national recognition.

Benedict Hernandez
Vice President and General Manager eTelecare Global Solutions

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Business Leadership

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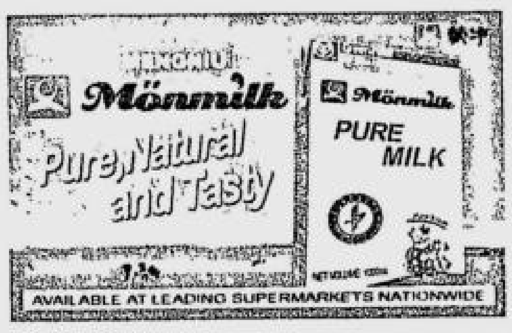
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Daisy at 90

A constellation of theater and film actresses will pay tribute to the First Lady of Philippine Theater on Jan. 26

By Gibbs Cadiz

NATIONAL ARTIST FOR Theater Daisy Hontiveros-Avellana turns 90 on Jan. 26.

She'd gladly spend that day at home, resting, watching "Jeopardy" and her favorite talk shows, and just savoring the sunset years of a life lived extraordinarily well, but for the fact that a National Artist reaching 90 years old is a rare milestone that calls for something grander than an afternoon nap.

"Ninety! Can you believe it?" she asks herself, incredulous that she has survived this long.

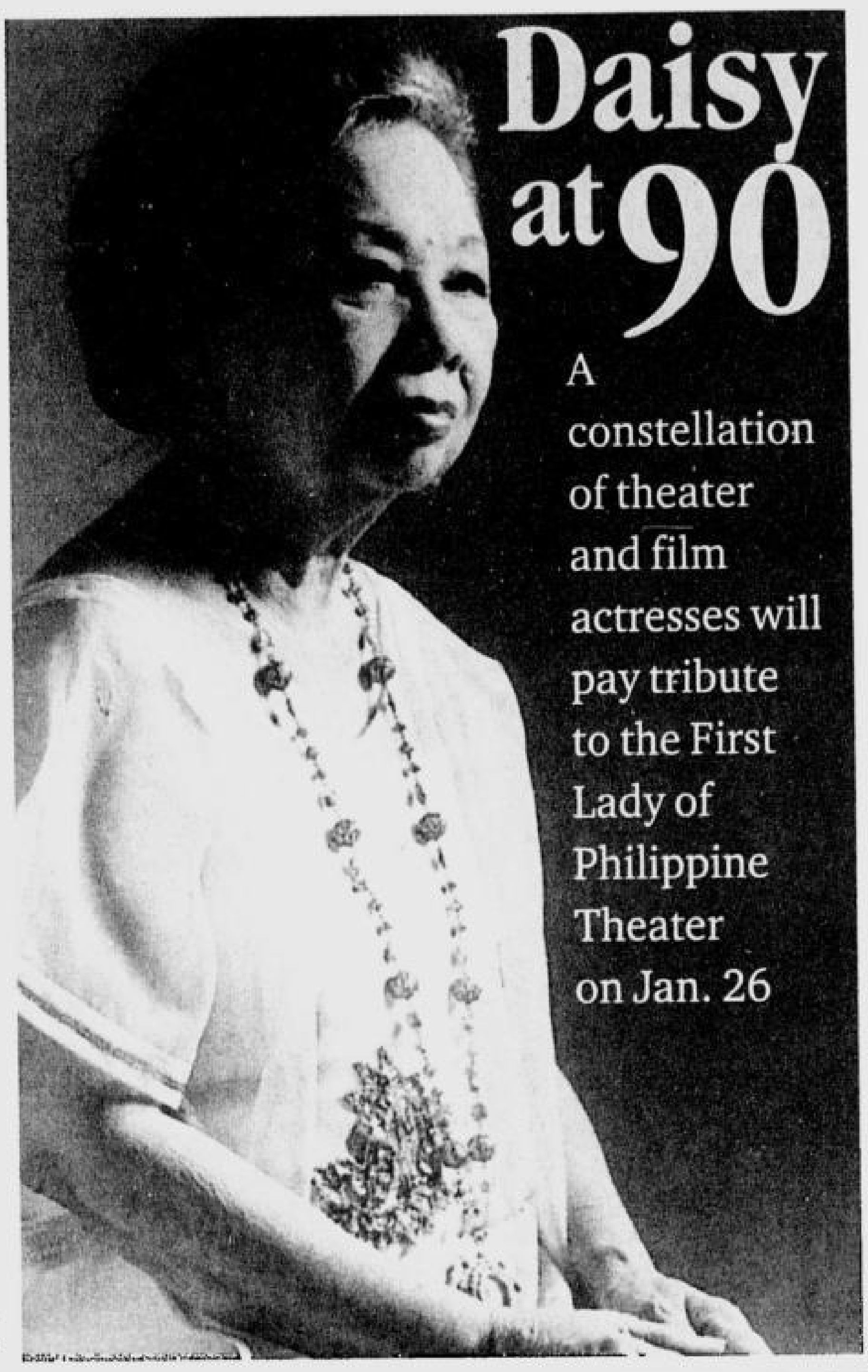
Avellana, in her nonagenarian years, is a bit hard of hearing, but otherwise suffers from no major illnesses. She's very lucid, her memory still sharp with color and detail.

She remembers the high points of her Renaissance life (actress for theater, film and radio, writer, director, teacher, all-around cultural worker), and is not above laughing at the occasional low moments.

Like the time she went to a well-known doctor to research on drug addiction. She was about to play Mary Tyrone, the drug-addled mother of a dysfunctional family in Eugene O'Neill's "Long Day's Journey into Night," and she needed guidance on how an addict —a woman at that—moved, thought, responded.

Her visit to the doctor was duly noted by Manila's insular society, and word quickly went around that the eminent Daisy Hontiveros Avellana, muse and wife of the equally celebrated film and theater director Lamberto Avellana, had become unhinged.

"*Nabuang daw ako*," says Avellana, chortling. "They said, *Ay*, Daisy's gone nuts! So I said, Okay, I'm nuts! And that really went around, you know."



NATIONAL Artist for Theater Daisy Hontiveros-Avellana

Acclaimed roles

To celebrate her 90th birthday, the Cultural Center of the Philippines is mounting "Daisies" on Jan. 26, a grand tribute that will gather some 26 women —acting luminaries from theater and film—to perform excerpts of Avellana's most acclaimed roles.

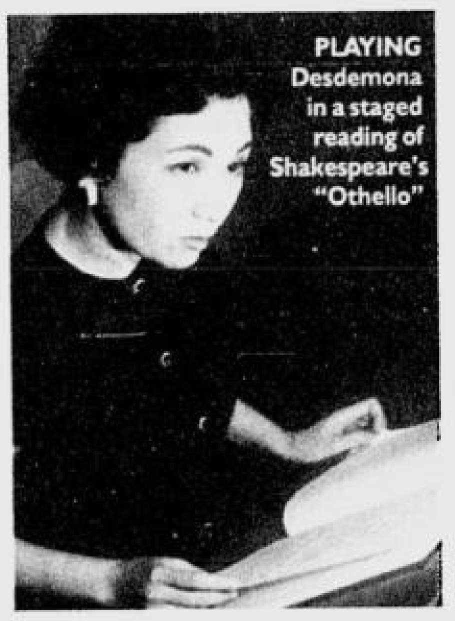
Her frequent collaborators Naty Crame-Rogers and Rustica Carpio will read lines from Nick Joaquin's "Portrait of the Artist as Filipino" while four musical stars—Celeste Legaspi, Carla Martinez, Menchu Lauchengco-Yulo and May Bayot—will sing excerpts from Cayabyab-Tinio's "Larawan," the musical version of the play.

Cecille Guidote Alvarez as Medea; Shamaine Centenera Buencamino as Desdemona; Baby Barredo as Sarah Bernhardt; Avellana's daughter Ivi Cosio as Bernarda Alba (she played Bernarda's daughter Adela opposite her mother in the original production); Frances Makil as Lady Macbeth; and a student from the Philippine High School for the Arts reading from Avellana's first starring role in college, John Galsworthy's "The Silver Box"—these, plus appearances by other actresses such as Gina Alajar, Malou de Guzman, Vivian Velez and Dolly Benavides (the very first Paula, now a lawyer) under Irma Adlawan's staging, promise a distinguished night worthy of the presence of the First Lady of Philippine Theater.

Avellana herself seems flustered at all the attention. "When I first heard about it, I said, 'Is it possible? I can't believe it! Me?'"

Gracious, visionary

Her characteristic self-effacement was only one element of the gracious but visionary personality Avellana brought to her trailblazing work across Philippine theater, radio, film and media (she was a magazine editor and award-winning short story writer, too) for decades, beginning in the prewar years.


PLAYING Desdemona in a staged reading of Shakespeare's "Othello"

Along with her husband and 48 other friends, she helped found the Barangay Theater Guild (BTG) in 1939, now the country's oldest existing theater company. Its last production was a dramatic reading of Ladislas Fodor's "The Vigil" at the Far Eastern University Theater in September 2006—directed, but of course, by Avellana.

BTG's weekend productions, mostly staged by her husband, allowed Avellana to play some of the greatest female roles in drama: Medea, Joan of Arc, Lady Macbeth, Sarah Bernhardt, Hecuba, Bernarda Alba, Desdemona, Lupe in Nick Joaquin's "Tatarin" and, most indelibly, Candida in another Joaquin opus, "Portrait of the Artist as Filipino."

Her Candida was so definitive that she ended up playing it "countless" times, in her estimation. In one run alone, held at the open-air Aurora Gardens in Intramuros, Avellana essayed Candida some 200 times opposite Dolly Benavides as Paula (Crame-Rogers later took over). Armando Goyena played the role of Tony Javier.

In a documentary that accompanied Avellana's conferment of National Artist honors in 1999, Bienvenido Lumbera, now a fellow National Artist (for Literature), recalled watching this play as a young man. For him, "Daisy Avellana's Candida in 'Portrait' was the highest moment of Philippine theater. She *was* Philippine theater at a time when there was hardly any Philippine theater."

When Lamberto filmed "Portrait," Avellana and Crame-Rogers reprised their roles. It was Avellana's lone foray into film as an actress ("My parents were against it, and also my children"), but she would go on to win recognition for her story treatment of "Sakay," and would also help research her husband's scripts for the classic films "Anak Dalita" and "Badjao."

Her work as director, actor and producer of adapted plays for radio is even more remarkable. Starting in 1952, BTG produced weekly 45-minute dramatic readings broadcast over radio dzPI. Daisy adapted and cast the plays, and Lamberto directed the readings with a live audience in the studio.

The first Shakespearean play to be aired locally in its entirety was BTG's "Macbeth." In 1952 alone, the readings made up a staggering canon: Anderson's "Joan of Lorraine"; Shaw's "Bury the Dead"; Howard's "They Knew What They Wanted"; Guerrero's "Forever," "Forsaken House" and "Frustrations"; Kaufman and Hart's "The Man Who Came to Dinner"; Zulueta da Costa's "Like the Molave"; Hellman's "Little Foxes"; Lorca's "Blood Wedding" and "The House of Bernarda Alba"; Gogol's "Inspector General"; Williams' "The Glass Menagerie"; Osborn's "On Borrowed Time"; Chekhov's "Marriage Proposal"; Shakespeare's "Othello," "Julius Caesar," "Hamlet," "The Merchant of Venice" and many more.

Their work in radio and the stage didn't pay—everything was *gratis*— but the couple didn't mind.

"My husband and I weren't rich, but we loved what we were doing," said Avellana in the 1999 documentary. "And that was good enough for us."

Lesson in humility

The greatest lesson she has learned from her work in theater, she says, is humility. And she has the requisite life-changing anecdote to back it up.

"[English teacher and drama coach] Jean Edades gave me the best lesson in humility. At that time, I was already the star of all the plays in UP. And then, when we were putting up these three one-act plays, she said I was going to play the role of a maid! I was hurt, of course, and humiliated. I told Mrs. Edades I had a headache and went home. I told my parents about it, expecting them to side with me. But my parents [Supreme Court Justice José Hontiveros and Vicenta Pardo] instead scolded me! They said, Go back, apologize, and play the role. So I did. Afterwards, her theater friends told Mrs.

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Piolo interacts with poets, artists in CCP show

SOME 50 FILIPINO POETS AND writers representing several generations will take part in the visual-cum-textual art exhibit, "Chromatext Reloaded," Jan. 25-Feb. 28 at the Cultural Center of the Philippines Bulwagang Juan Luna (Main Gallery.)

The show turns a page from previous "Chromatext" I and II mounted in the 1980s by the Philippine Literary Arts Council (PLAC).

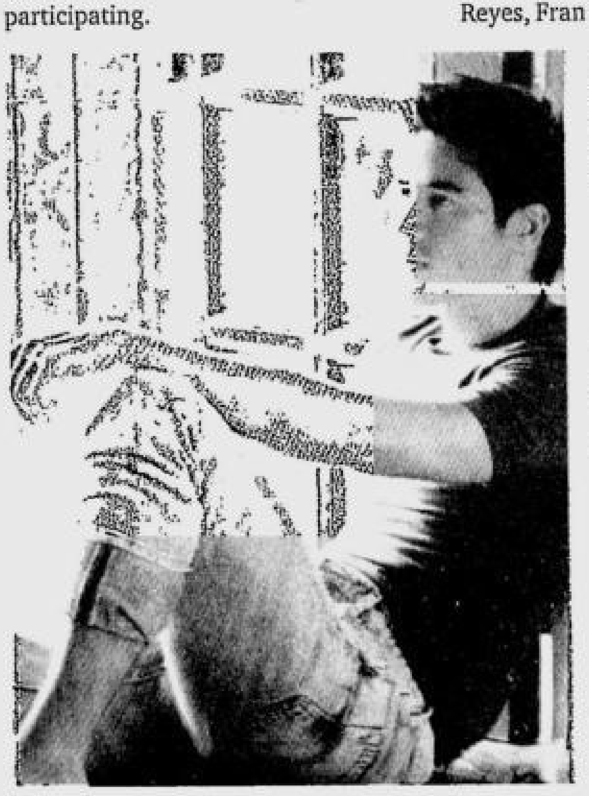
Curated by Sid Gomez Hildawa, Jean-Marie Syjuco and Krip Yuson, "Chromatext Reloaded" celebrates the 25th anniversary of PLAC with founders Jimmy Abad, Cirilo Bautista, Ricky de Ungria and Yuson leading the poet-exhibitors.

Their works—from holographs to photographs, illustrations with poems to oil paintings, sculptural installations to video—will be joined by those of other distinguished writers such as National Artist Edith Tiempo, Gilda Cordero Fernando, Raul Ingles, Tita Lacambra-Ayala, Sylvia Mendez-Ventura, the late Lilia Amansec, Ophelia Dimalanta, Merlie Alunan, Marjorie Evasco, Butch Dalisay, Pete Lacaba, Cesare AX Syjuco, Juaniyo Arcellana, RayVi Sunico, Danton Remoto, Frank Rivera, Margot Marfori and Hildawa.

From abroad, PLAC members and friends have sent in their contributions: David Cortes Medalla in London; and Eric Gamalinda, Nick Carbo, Luisa Igloria, Eileen Tabios, Zach Linmark and Melissa Kristoffel-Nolledo in the United States.

Matinee idol Piolo Pascual has written Linmark's verses on pages of the Star Studio fan magazine, and the literary-visual showcase is a centerpiece in the exhibit.

Butch Macansantos, Babeth Lolarga and Frank Cimatu from Baguio are also participating.

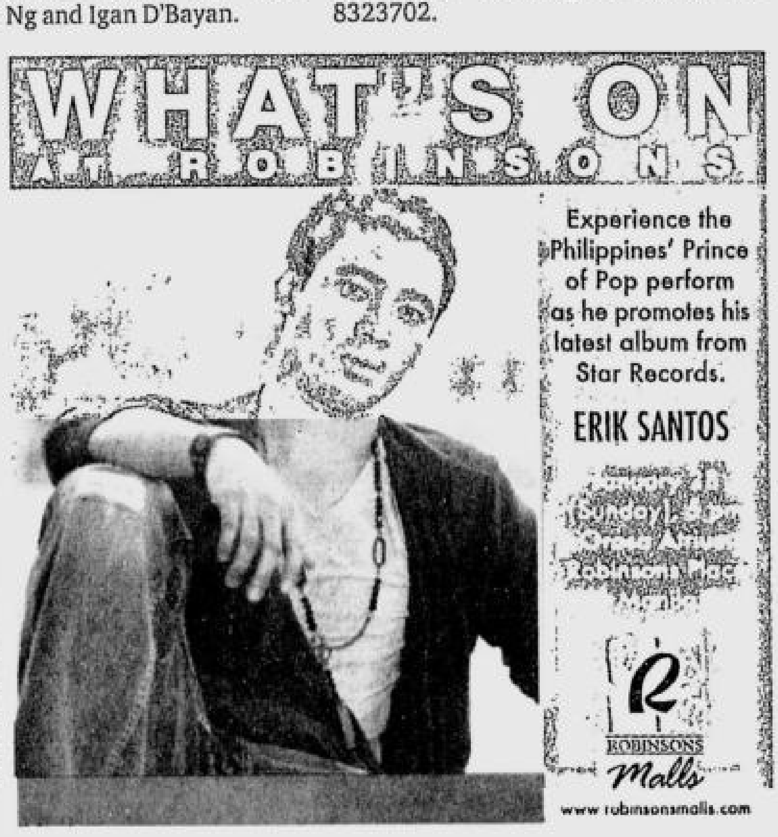


ACTOR Piolo Pascual

Visual artists participating are National Artist Benedicto "Bencab" Cabrera, Pandy Aviado, Fil Delacruz, Manny Baldemor, Rock Drilon, Jean-Marie Syjuco, Judy Sibayan, Heber Bartolome, Raul Funilla, Beaulah Taguiwalo, Erlinda Panlilio, Bheng Dalisay, Lorena Javier, Boy Yuchengco, Erlinda Panlilio, Marivic Rufino, Jun Cruz Reyes, Fran Ng and Igan D'Bayan.

Other participating writers are Jovi Miroy, Vim Nadera, Ng, Lourd de Veyra. Jessica Zafra, Sarge Lacuesta, Joel Toledo, Ginny Mata, Carlomar Daoana, Mookie Katigbak and Angelo Suarez.

Performance art, musical works and readings will highlight the exhibit opening on Thursday at 6 p.m. Call 8323702.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Onglepho show opens gallery

JAMES ONGLEPHO'S 26TH exhibit will be the inaugural show of the new Asia Art Gallery at the SM Mall of Asia on Jan. 26.

The show consists of landscapes and flower paintings in oil, pastel and colored pencil.

Onglepho is a Filipino artist whose paintings are influenced by the Chinese style. His works display detailed observation of nature.

His landscapes and flowers derive from Chinese composition but rendered with the technique of Western painting, resulting in a semi-abstract style for which Onglepho has been recognized in Philippine art.

The Asia Art Gallery had been housed at the Shangri-La Plaza Mall since 1994. It has attracted art collectors and enthusiasts.

"The local art circle has thrived since the 1990s, when SM Megamall opened Art Center and hosted the exhibits of many master artists," says Onglepho.

"Art galleries in the same area also helped nurture an art environment where more people learned to appreciate painting. It paved the way for an active art scene. More art galleries opened and the crowds grew. Soon, other malls followed suit and opened their own gallery spaces."

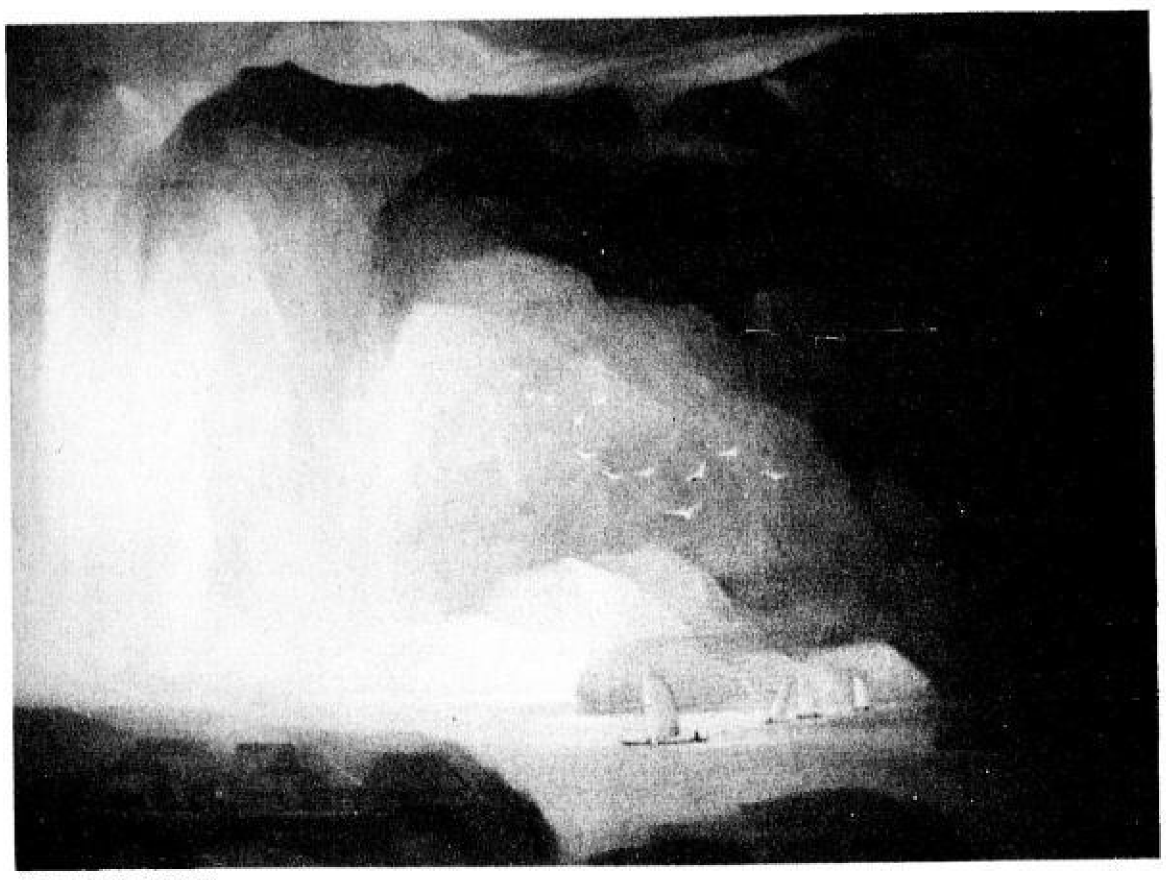
Managing a gallery isn't easy, says the artist.

"First, you'll need honesty and honor to carry on permanent business," he says. "Then you'll have to realize that collecting is more important than selling.

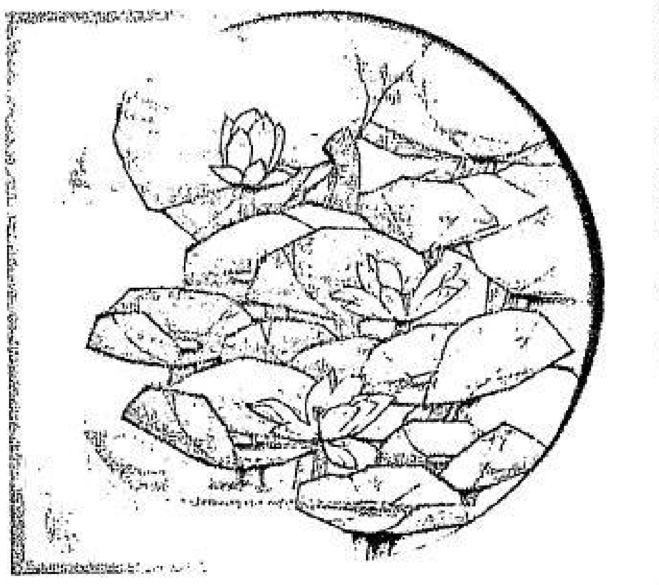
"Get master artworks if you can because finding good artworks can be difficult, especially when it's an old piece done by a master artist. Remember that the value of good artworks increases over time."

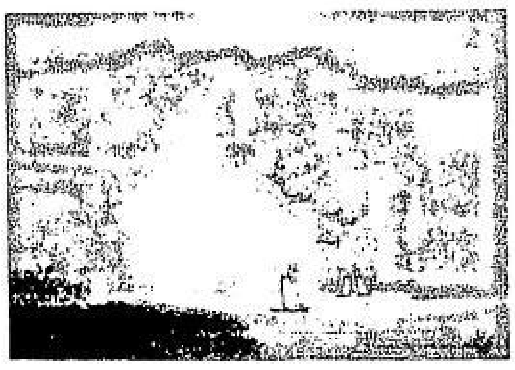
Onglepho says a 36" x 48" oil painting by Manansala or Legaspi that was worth around P30,000-P40,000 in the 1980s may now be worth P1-P2 million today.

"It is not surprising that in the Philippines many art collectors eventually become gallery owners," Onglepho says. "They know the value of paintings and view them as worthy pieces of investment."


"DREAMSCAPE"

THE ARTIST



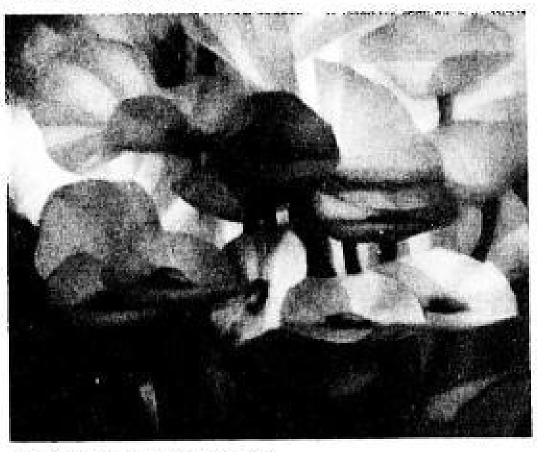

"LOTUS" (above) and "The Song of Life" (left)

Promising art scene

With the Philippine economy improving, the future of the local art scene looks promising. Onglepho related that in Taipei, Taiwan, in 1999, the Galleries Association of ROC sponsored Art Fair International at the World Trade Center. The sale of the five-day fair went as much as NT$130 million, thanks to careful planning and organization.

During that period, Taiwan's top artists had their oil paintings snapped up by collectors even before the oil on those paintings dried up.

At Section 4, Chung Hsiao East Road, Taipei, five condominiums of Apollo Building had 42 galleries in the 1990s. In January 2006, only six galleries remained open. But when the galleries association sponsored another art fair in May, the art industry was revived.


"AMONG the Flowers"

Onglepho notes that the art market in China, established in 1995, has since become an emerging artist's haven due to the progress in major cities like Shanghai and Beijing.

Galleries in China are doing good business because many people have become art collectors, participating actively in art auctions, especially in Shanghai, which Onglepho believes has become the center of art in Asia.

The good economy has translated into a greater appreciation for the arts, and people have begun investing in artworks.

The rise in the market was also due largely to the success of art auction companies. In 2003, China's 28 auction companies held 569 auctions in one year, and sales reached 1.6 billion yuans. In 2004, 46 auction companies combined for total sales of 57 million yuans. In 2005, 36 auction companies held auctions, and sales reached 910 million yuans.

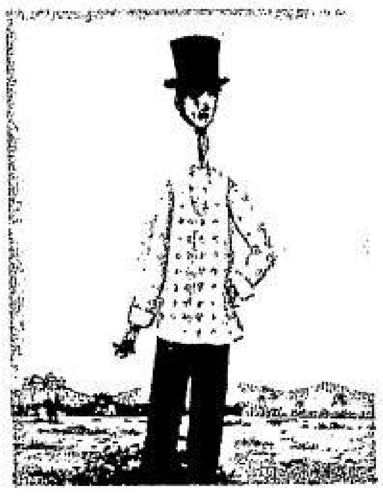
Galleries in the Philippines continue to open over the years, and Onglepho is optimistic that the art scene still has a bright future.

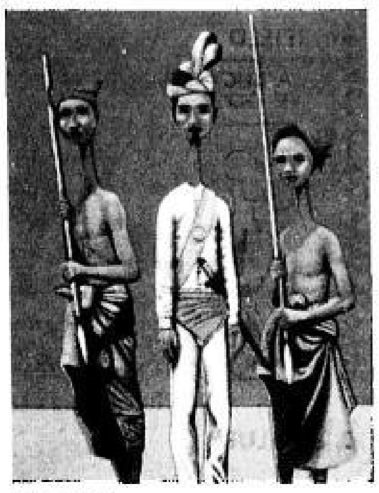
"What we need is cooperation within the art industry," he says. "We need to use each one's individual strengths to revitalize the industry by using official art exhibition sites. Galleries must take the first step and strive for the world's market by participating in international exhibitions, organizing more exchanges with other nations, and expanding art activity and exhibition spaces. Then we can generate more opportunities in an international scale."

Onglepho thinks it is possible to stage a national art fair, and later an international art fair.

"We can stand on our own feet, and at the same time embrace the universe by coming up with a new art vision that spans the 21st century. If the SM Group will support such an idea, it may help the local art industry break into the world art scene."

The 26th one-man exhibit of James Onglepho will open on Jan. 26, Friday, 6 p.m. at the new Asia Art Gallery, 2/F, Unit 2113, Entertainment Mall (across Imax Theater), SM Mall of Asia , Pasay City. Guests of honor are Wee Le Peng, Michael Say, and Henry Lim. Call 9013062.


"GINOO"


"DATU"

Dominic Rubio in Singapore

DOMINIC RUBIO'S "EARLY Times" is the inaugural show of Galerie Joaquin Singapore for 2007.

The show, which opens on Jan. 26, features 24 works inspired by Spanish colonial Philippines.

Galerie Joaquin Singapore is at the Regent Hotel, 1 Cuscaden Road, G/F, Unit 3, Singapore 249715 (tel. 65-67253113).

A graduate of the University of Santo Tomas School of Fine Arts, Rubio has been painting for two decades now. He has been a member of the Blumentritt Group of Artists since the mid-'90s.

In 2002, together with Gig de Pio, Jerry Morada, Bayani Ray Acala and Edwin Tres Reyes, he founded the Guevarra Group of Artists.

Born in Paete, the lakeshore town in Laguna famous for its artistic woodcarving tradition, Rubio first worked briefly in the creative department of Puris Lintas of Manila, and later at The Pearl Farm in Davao del Sur.

He traveled around the Caraga Region in Northern Mindanao, learning about the various cultural groups and ethnic minorities in these places such as the Mandaya and the T'boli tribes. He also lived with the B'laans and the Badjaos in the south of Mindanao.

In his works, Rubio explores Filipino womanhood.

In his Singapore show, he will unveil radically new works capturing the essence of the Filipina as situated in new landscapes.

Galerie Joaquin Singapore will also organize shows by Juvenal Sansó, Mario Parial, Lydia Velasco and Carlo Magno this year.

Tribute to pianist and pedagogue

SOME OF THE COUNTRY'S TOP pianists who were either former students or friends of pianist and former University of Santo Tomas piano professor Marina Leogardo-Escaño (1929-2006) will pay tribute to her in a free concert, "Remembering Marina," on Jan. 27, 5 p.m., at the Francisco Santiago Hall, Equitable PCIBank Tower I at H.V. de la Costa St. and Makati Ave., Makati.

Former associates who will perform include Reynaldo Reyes, who will do Liszt's "La Campanella"; Ingrid Sala-Santamaria, Mendelssohn's Piano Concerto in G minor; UST Music dean Raul Sunico and professor Mary Anne Espina, two movements from Suite for 2 Pianos by Rachmaninoff; UST Music professors Julie Ann Hallazgo and Peter Porticos, "Malagueña"; and Najib Ismail, who will interpret Chopin's Etude No.1, Op.25.

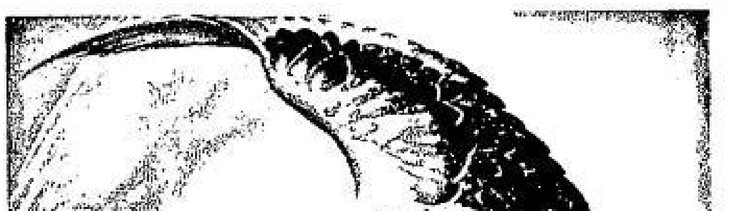
Friends Gary Garcia, Jonathan Coo, Marsha Nicolas and Helen Reyes, and former students Allan de la Cruz, Mary Ann Choco, Handel Francisco and Carlos Perion will also perform.

The late Leogardo-Escaño was one of the last students of Maestro Francisco Santiago (whose name the concert venue carries).

She obtained her Bachelor of Music, major in Piano, degree from the UST Conservatory of Music.

In the mid-'70s, she joined the UST Music faculty, where she made her mark as a good teacher of technique.

"Remembering Marina" is presented by the Manila Chamber Orchestra Foundation Inc.-Equitable PCIBank in cooperation with the UST Conservatory of Music.

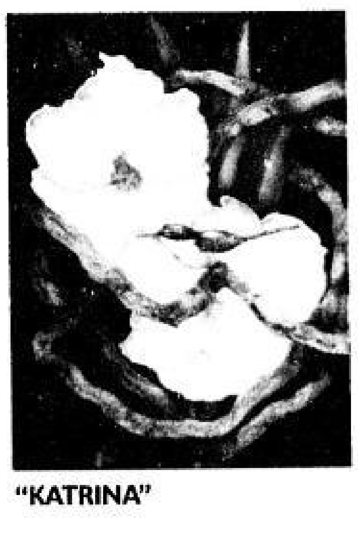

"PAG-ASA"

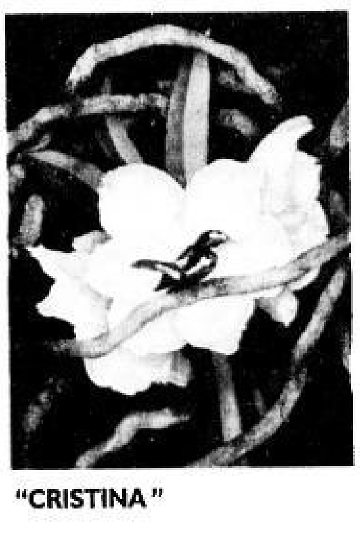
Joven Ignacio's environmental art

THE PHILIPPINE SCIENCE HIGH SCHOOL FOUNDATION INC. (PSHSFI) and Rockwell Land Inc. present Joven Ignacio's "Aruga," Jan. 26- Feb. 2, at R-1 North Court, Power Plant Mall, Rockwell Center, Makati.

Ignacio's flora and fauna are noted for their exquisiteness. The works reveal the artist's environmental consciousness.

The exhibit is for the benefit of PSHSFI Godparent Program. Guest artist is Myra Ruth Picart. Call 9240655.


"KATRINA"


"CRISTINA"

VISUAL ARTS

Magsaysay-Ho monoprints at Yuchengco

Anita Magsaysay-Ho will exhibit hand-colored monoprints at the Yuchengco Museum (RCBC Plaza, Gil Puyat Ave., Makati) starting Jan. 27. The artist will work with the Singapore Tyler Print Institute and the University of the Philippines Initiatives for Culture and the Arts to make 50 prints on handmade cotton paper with women and rural life as subjects. Patrick Uy will take photos of the artist working at the UP workshop with the printers. Mentored by Fernando and Pablo Amorsolo, Vicente Rivera, Ireneo Miranda and Fabian de la Rosa, Magsaysay-Ho is considered the first Filipina modernist.

'Superheroes' at Crucible

Tony de Zuñiga presents "Superheroes," until Jan. 28, at the Crucible Gallery (4/F, SM Megamall, Bldg. A., Mandaluyong City). After over 30 years in the comics industry in the United States, the artist will showcase his "superheroes." The characters he has drawn through the years are a veritable superhero pantheon spanning the parallel universes of DC and Marvel: Batman, Superman, Spiderman, Supergirl, Conan the Barbarian, the Incredible Hulk, the X-Men, Thor, the Punisher, Blade and Red Sonia. Call 6356061.

Decker at Ayala Museum

"Tom Decker: Ignition," an exhibit of recent sculpture and ceramics, will be on display at the Ayala Museum Artist's Space, 2/F, Glass Wing, Jan. 25- Feb. 8. The exhibit features small-scale figurative sculptures and ceramic tea bowls by California native Tom Decker. He will also conduct a public lecture and demonstration at the Ayala Museum, 2-4 p.m., on Jan. 26.

Dizon at Pintô Art Gallery

Jeff Dizon presents his 10th one-man show "Watawat," Jan. 28-Feb.25, at Pintô Art Gallery (1 Sierra Madre St., Grandheights, Antipolo City, Rizal). The exhibit features 30 recent works on canvas and paper. The exhibit brings to fore several of Dizon's new works that tangentially comment on the mores and culture of the essential Filipino. Call 6971015.

Aguilar at Mag:net Gallery

Mag:net Gallery ABS-CBN presents Alex Aguilar's "Potluck," Jan. 23-Feb. 10. Aguilar's first solo exhibit comes threaded through with a diffused, drawn-out set of themes and personal negotiations of self-imposed bouts with formalist problem-solving. By taking from the imagined to take jibes at the real, Aguilar makes his paintings personally and collectively resonant. Call 4100995 or e-mail magnetplus @gmail.com or visit www.magnet. com.ph.

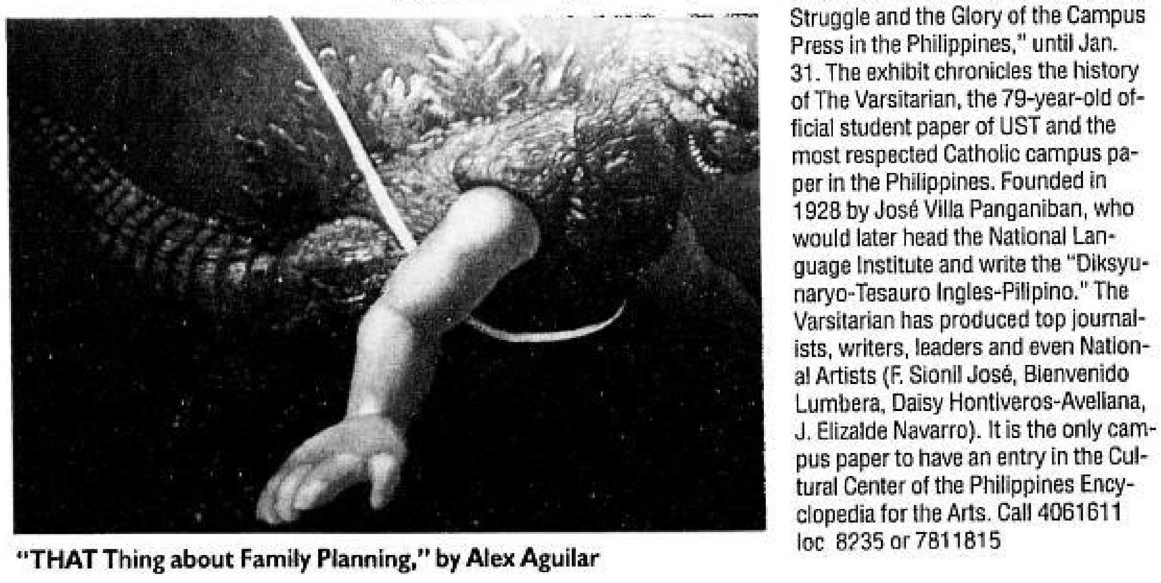

"THAT Thing about Family Planning," by Alex Aguilar

Photo workshops at Alcove

The Filipinas Heritage Library's Alcove presents "The Alcove Perspective: Workshops." Digital Photography 101 is set on Jan. 24, 26, 29, 31, and Feb. 2, 6-9 p.m. Call 8921801. E-mail events@filipinaslibrary.org.ph or visit www.filipinaslibrary.org.ph.

Campus press history exhibit at UST Museum

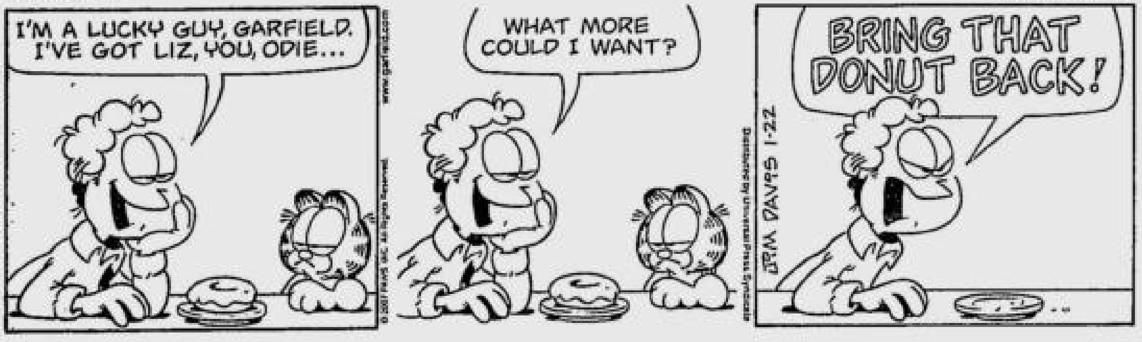
The University of Santo Tomas Museum of Arts and Sciences is holding the exhibit "The Varsitarian at 80: The Struggle and the Glory of the Campus Press in the Philippines," until Jan. 31. The exhibit chronicles the history of The Varsitarian, the 79-year-old official student paper of UST and the most respected Catholic campus paper in the Philippines. Founded in 1928 by José Villa Panganiban, who would later head the National Language Institute and write the "Diksyunaryo-Tesauro Ingles-Pilipino." The Varsitarian has produced top journalists, writers, leaders and even National Artists (F. Sionil José, Bienvenido Lumbera, Daisy Hontiveros-Avellana, J. Elizalde Navarro). It is the only campus paper to have an entry in the Cultural Center of the Philippines Encyclopedia for the Arts. Call 4061611 loc 8235 or 7811815

ComicRelief

e-mail feedback at arts@inquirer.com.ph

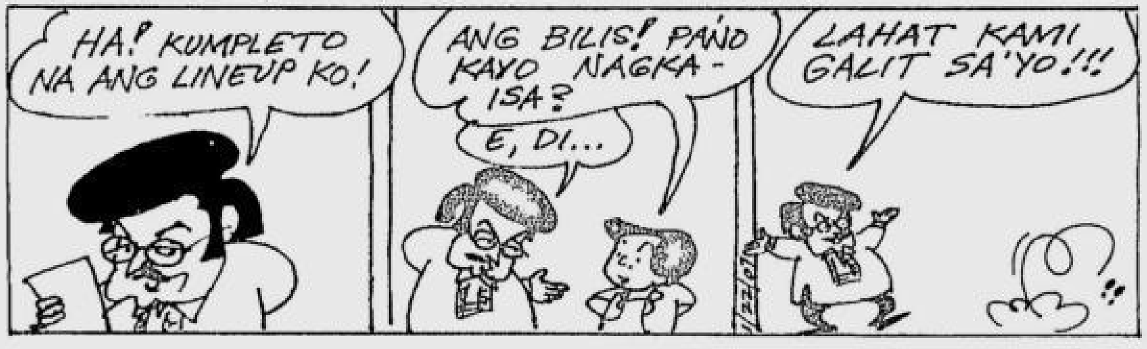
GARFIELD

BY JIM DAVIS


I'M A LUCKY GUY, GARFIELD. I'VE GOT LIZ, YOU, ODIE...
WHAT MORE COULD I WANT?
BRING THAT DONUT BACK!
JIM DAVIS 1-22

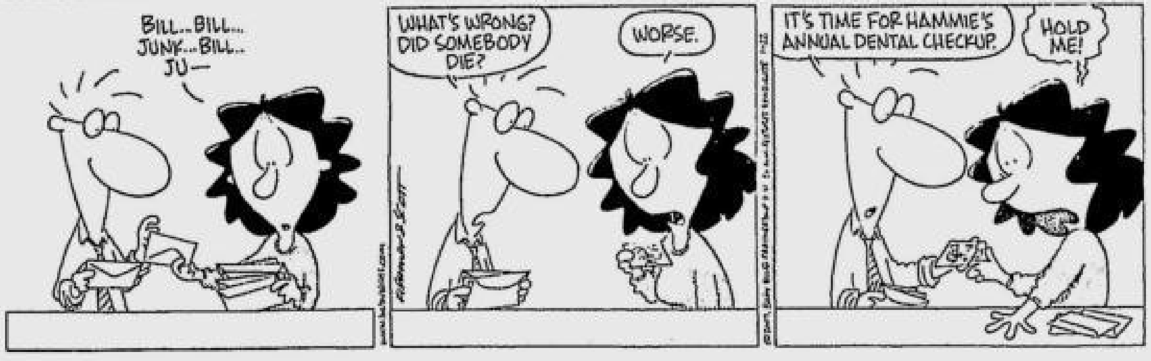
A. LIPIN

BY JESS ABRERA


HA! KUMPLETO NA ANG LINEUP KO!
ANG BILIS! PANO KAYO NAGKA-ISA?
E, DI...
LAHAT KAMI GALIT SA'YO!!!

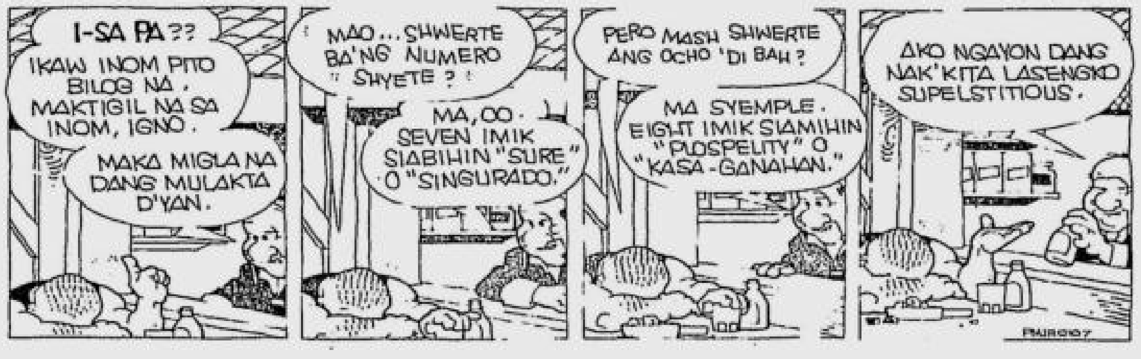
BABY BLUES

BY JERRY SCOTT


BILL...BILL... JUNK...BILL... JU—
WHAT'S WRONG? DID SOMEBODY DIE?
WORSE.
IT'S TIME FOR HAMMIE'S ANNUAL DENTAL CHECKUP.
HOLD ME!

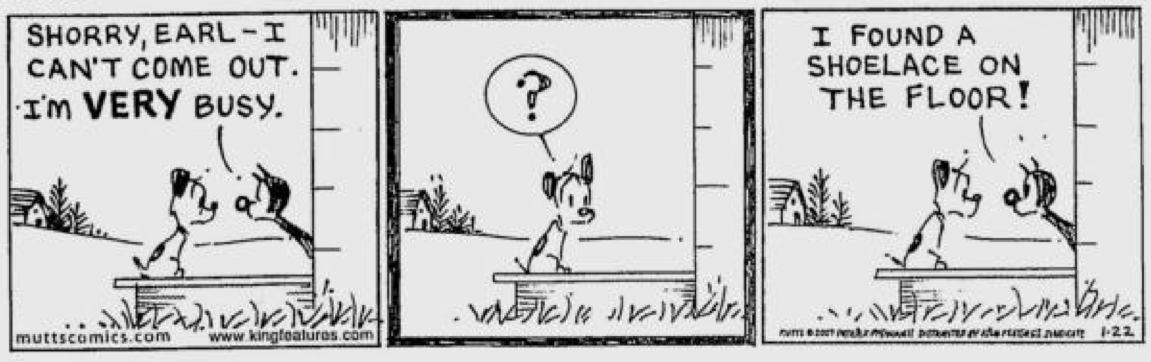
PUGAD BABOY

BY P.M. JUNIOR


I-SA PA??
IKAW INOM PITO BILOG NA. MAKTIGIL NA SA INOM, IGNO.
MAKA MIGLA NA DANG MULAKTA D'YAN.
MAO... SHWERTE BA'NG NUMERO "SHYETE"?
MA, OO. SEVEN IMIK SIABIHIN "SURE" O "SINGURADO."
PERO MASH SHWERTE ANG OCHO 'DI BAH?
MA SYEMPLE. EIGHT IMIK SIAMIHIN "PLOSPELITY" O "KASA-GANAHAN."
AKO NGAYON DANG NAK'KITA LASENGKO SUPELSTITIOUS.

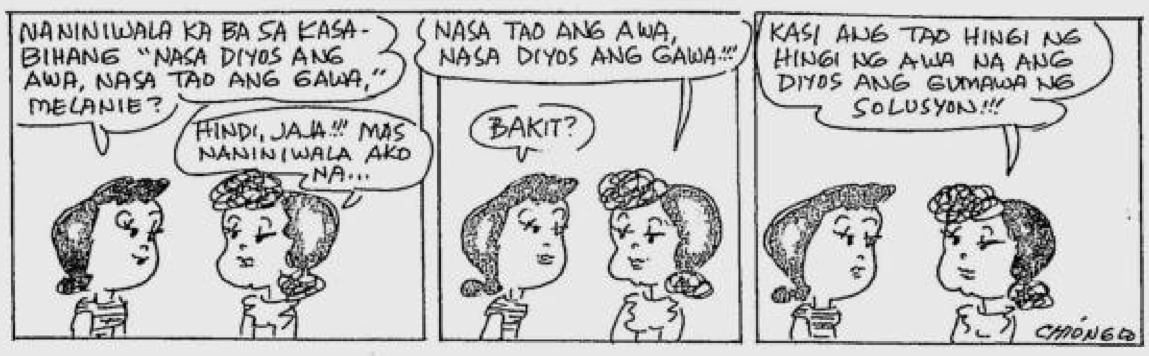
MUTTS

BY PATRICK McDONNELL


SHORRY, EARL – I CAN'T COME OUT. I'M VERY BUSY.
?
I FOUND A SHOELACE ON THE FLOOR!
muttscomics.com
www.kingfeatures.com
1-22

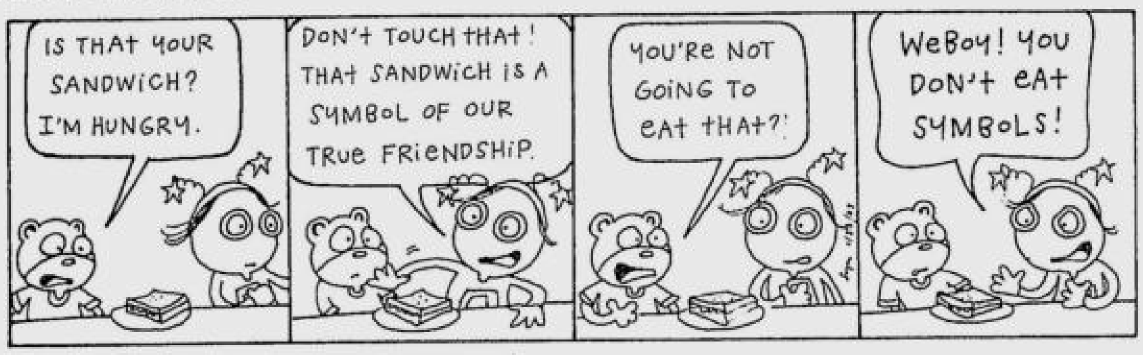
LOVEKNOTS

BY ELIZABETH CHIONGLO


NANINIWALA KA BA SA KASABIHANG "NASA DIYOS ANG AWA, NASA TAO ANG GAWA," MELANIE?
HINDI, JAJA!!! MAS NANINIWALA AKO NA...
NASA TAO ANG AWA, NASA DIYOS ANG GAWA!!!
BAKIT?
KASI ANG TAO HINGI NG HINGI NG AWA NA ANG DIYOS ANG GUMAWA NG SOLUSYON!!!
CHIONGLO

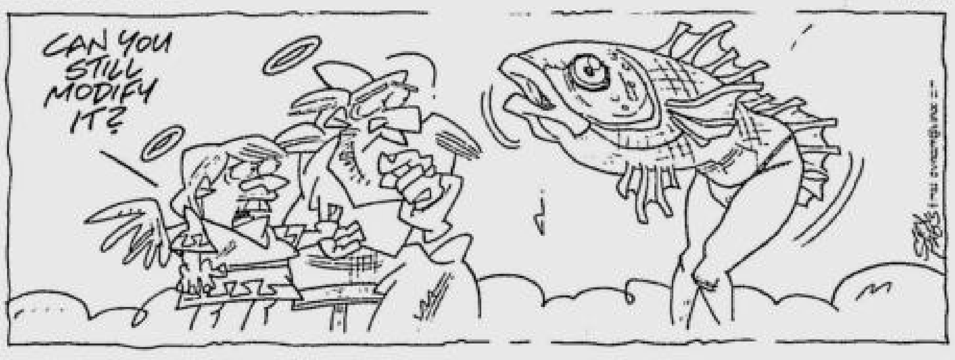
ATOMO AND WEBOY

BY LYRA GARCELLANO


IS THAT YOUR SANDWICH? I'M HUNGRY.
DON'T TOUCH THAT! THAT SANDWICH IS A SYMBOL OF OUR TRUE FRIENDSHIP.
YOU'RE NOT GOING TO EAT THAT?!
WEBOY! YOU DON'T EAT SYMBOLS!

DIVINE COMEDY

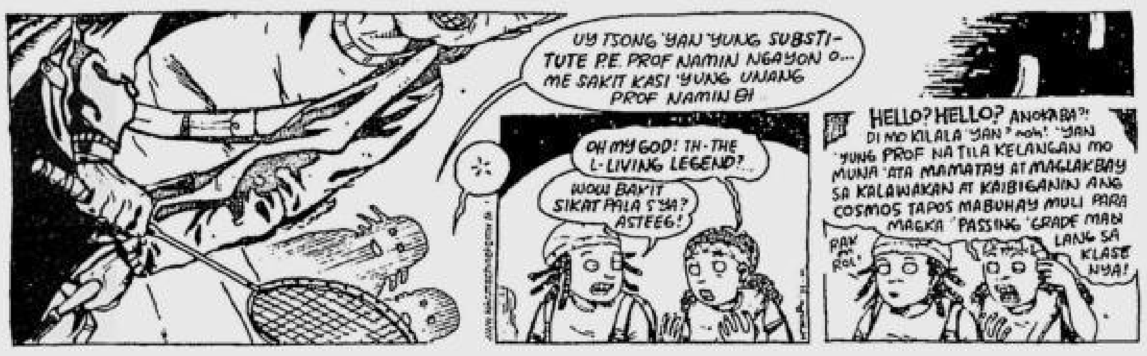
BY STEVEN PABALINAS


CAN YOU STILL MODIFY IT?

THE FIRST VERSION OF THE MERMAID

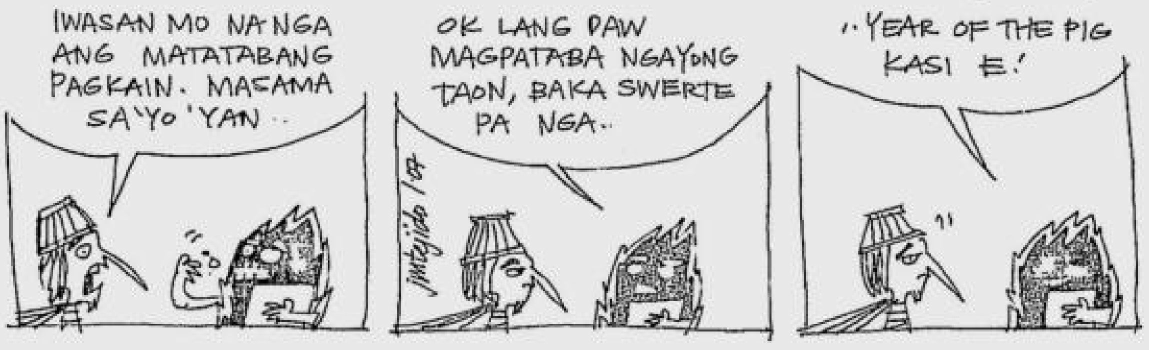
KIKO MACHINE

BY MANIX ABRERA


UY TSONG 'YAN 'YUNG SUBSTITUTE P.E. PROF NAMIN NGAYON O... ME SAKIT KASI 'YUNG UNANG PROF NAMIN EH
OH MY GOD! TH-THE L-LIVING LEGEND?
WOW BAKIT SIKAT PALA S'YA? ASTEEG!
HELLO? HELLO? ANOKABA?! DI MO KILALA 'YAN? noh! 'YAN 'YUNG PROF NA TILA KELANGAN MO MUNA 'ATA MAMATAY AT MAGLAKBAY SA KALAWAKAN AT KAIBIGANIN ANG COSMOS TAPOS MABUHAY MULI PARA MAGKA 'PASSING' GRADE MAN LANG SA KLASE NYA!
PAK! ROL!

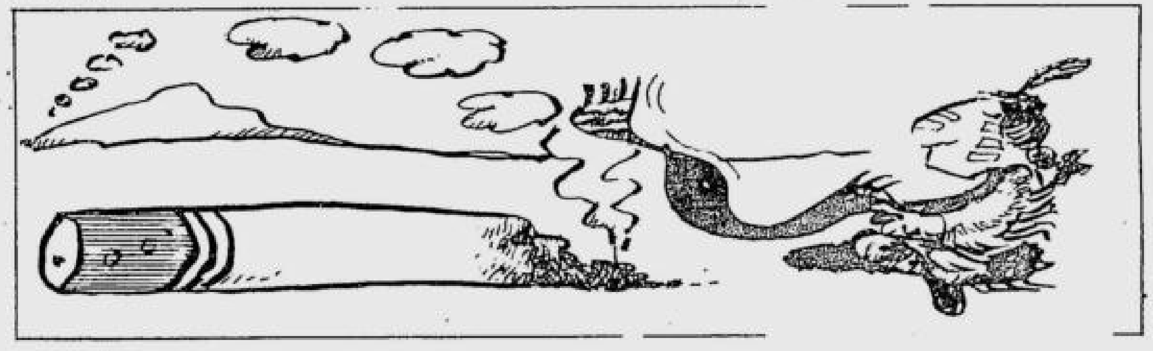
MIKROKOSMOS

BY JOMIKE TEJIDO


IWASAN MO NA NGA ANG MATATABANG PAGKAIN. MASAMA SA'YO 'YAN..
OK LANG DAW MAGPATABA NGAYONG TAON, BAKA SWERTE PA NGA..
..YEAR OF THE PIG KASI E!
jmtejido '07

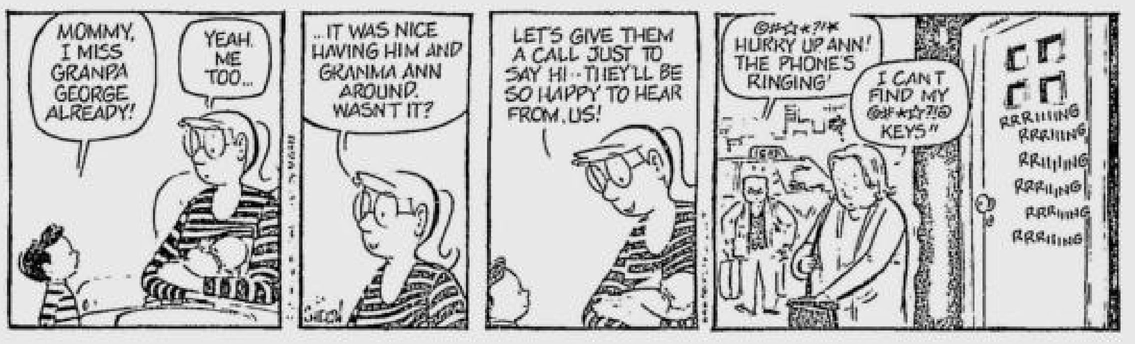
TULDOK

BY PAPU AND TATUM MILAMBILING



BEN

BY DANIEL SHELTON


MOMMY, I MISS GRANPA GEORGE ALREADY!
YEAH. ME TOO...
...IT WAS NICE HAVING HIM AND GRANMA ANN AROUND. WASN'T IT?
LET'S GIVE THEM A CALL JUST TO SAY HI·· THEY'LL BE SO HAPPY TO HEAR FROM US!
@#☆*?!* HURRY UP ANN! THE PHONE'S RINGING!
I CAN'T FIND MY @#☆*?!@ KEYS"
RRRIIING RRRIIING RRRIIING RRRIIING RRRIIING RRRIIING

DAILY CROSSWORD

1	2	3	4	5	■	6	7	8	■	9	10	11	12	13
14					■	15			■	16				
17					18				19					
20							■	■	21					
■	■	■	22			■	23	24		■	25			
26	27	28		■	29	30				■	31			
32				33	■	34				35	■	■	■	■
36					37		■	38			39	40	41	42
■	■	■	■	43			44		■	45				
46	47	48	49	■	50				51	■	52			
53				■	54			■	55	56		■	■	■
57				58		■	■	59				60	61	62
63						64	65							
66					■	67			■	68				
69					■	70			■	71				

By Michael T. Williams
Clearwater, FL

1/22/07

ACROSS
1 Ladies' men
6 Actor DeLuise
9 Copse units
14 Native Greenlander
15 Begley and Meese
16 Artist Matisse
17 1950 Best Picture nominee
20 Prufrock's creator
21 "__ Farm"
22 Gerund maker
23 Shortened bk.
25 Show of hands
26 Expression of disgust
29 Annexed
31 Time periods
32 Llama land
34 Empire of old
36 1982 Best Picture nominee
38 2000 Best Picture nominee
43 Above-par score
45 Shields film, "__ Nevada"
46 Egyptian goddess
50 Last, but not __
52 College credit
53 Point of a fork
54 Drop a fly, e.g.
55 Gives birth to
57 Frightens
59 Pope
63 1998 Best Picture nominee
66 Laptop images
67 Carte preceder
68 Red starter?
69 Parakeet enclosures
70 Orbiting part of Russia?
71 In an affectedly shy manner

DOWN
1 Itemization
2 Big burden
3 Occult letter
4 Has no taste for
5 Beer mug
6 Liability
7 "Star Trek" role for Auberjonois
8 Coll. Bulldogs
9 At that time
10 Return to life
11 Captivate
12 Listed mistakes
13 Crab-walks
18 Forum robe
19 Pantry
23 Axlike tool
24 White and Ford
26 Tasty tuber
27 Cycle starter?
28 LPs, updated
30 Cloak-and-__
33 Bro's sis
35 Crow hello
37 At least as much as
39 David or Michael
40 Stock-ticker stn.
41 Despot Amin
42 Hip dude
44 Corn serving
46 Slanting type
47 Ingredient in glass
48 Dazed and confused
49 Placid
51 Old pronoun
56 Caper
58 Fail to hit
59 Jack of talk shows
60 Inconclusive
61 Roll up
62 Excoriate
64 Comic-strip crash
65 Actor Wallach

Saturday's Puzzle Solved

R	E	C	A	P	P	E	D	■	S	C	A	M	P	S
E	N	A	M	E	L	E	R	■	O	R	D	E	A	L
H	A	B	A	N	E	R	A	■	M	U	D	D	L	E
E	B	O	N	■	D	I	G	R	E	S	S	I	O	N
A	L	O	U	D	■	E	N	U	R	E	■	C	O	D
R	E	S	E	A	T	■	E	N	S	■	C	A	K	E
D	R	E	N	C	H	■	T	E	A	■	A	L	A	R
■	■	■	S	E	E	D	■	S	U	M	P	■	■	■
T	A	R	E	■	O	I	L	■	L	E	A	N	E	D
A	M	O	S	■	R	N	A	■	T	A	C	O	M	A
N	E	T	■	S	I	G	M	A	■	D	I	V	A	N
T	R	A	P	E	Z	O	I	D	S	■	T	E	N	D
A	C	T	I	V	E	■	N	O	T	I	O	N	A	L
R	E	E	L	E	R	■	A	B	E	R	R	A	T	E
A	D	D	E	R	S	■	R	E	P	A	S	S	E	S

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1/22/07

HOROSCOPE

YOU BORN TODAY: You're very intense about whatever you do. You don't take halfway measures. You express your emotions quite freely and dramatically, although some of you like to appear more conservative in public. You pay great attention to detail. Whatever you do is creative and original. A major change might take place this year, perhaps as significant as in 1998.

Birthdate of: Diane Lane, actress; Joseph Wambaugh, author; Willa Ford, singer.

ARIES (March 21 to April 19): Surprise opportunities connected with travel, publishing or education are likely at this time in your life. However, interruptions in the same areas are also likely. (Could go either way.)

TAURUS (April 20 to May 20): Some of you will have a piece of luck that is like a bolt out of the blue. Unexpected inheritances, gifts or favors could come your way today or this month.

GEMINI (May 21 to June 20): Relations with partners and close friends are definitely a source of surprise for you now. Some of you want to break free. Others are delighted at new intimacy.

CANCER (June 21 to July 22): You might feel restless with your job. All kinds of opportunities seem to be up in the air. It's a hard call for you now to know exactly what to do.

LEO (July 23 to Aug. 22): Romance is a bit of crapshoot right now. In fact, your luck is all over the place. Some of you could win something; some of you could lose. Parents should be vigilant about children.

VIRGO (Aug. 23 to Sept. 22): Matters connected with home and family are undergoing changes. You want to break free of any kind of restrictions. Don't be too eager for change for change's sake, however.

LIBRA (Sept. 23 to Oct. 22): This is a bumpy, jumpy day. Take extra precautions when driving or walking. You might also want to be more careful about what pops out of your mouth. You feel quite impetuous and rash today.

SCORPIO (Oct. 23 to Nov. 21): Unusual planetary aspects can affect your money scene today. You could win money; you could make a bundle; you could lose some.

SAGITTARIUS (Nov. 22 to Dec. 21): Your freedom is very important to you at this time. This could create problems in relationships. You don't want anyone telling you what to do!

CAPRICORN (Dec. 22 to Jan. 19): Opportunities exist all around you today, but it's difficult to say what might happen. If a window of opportunity does open, act quickly, because it will be brief!

AQUARIUS (Jan. 20 to Feb. 18): Friends are unpredictable today. Someone might surprise you in a pleasant way or catch you off-guard. You want to be your own person today.

PISCES (Feb. 19 to March 20): You're not in the mood to take orders from authority figures today. That's for certain. Nevertheless, someone might offer you a juicy opportunity. If so, act quickly!

CONCEPTIS SU DOKU

Conceptis Sudoku by Dave Green

		4	9			1	7	
					7		4	2
5		3				8		9
1				7			2	
			4	8	2			
	3			1				7
2		8				7		3
9	6		1					
	4	1			5	6		

Difficulty Level ☆

1/22

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HOW TO PLAY SU DOKU

Fill the grid so that every column, every row and every 3x3 box contains the digits 1 to 9.
Tips and program at www.sudoku.com

Answer to previous puzzle

7	4	2	8	6	3	9	5	1
8	3	9	5	1	2	4	7	6
1	5	6	9	7	4	3	8	2
6	7	5	3	2	1	8	9	4
3	1	8	6	4	9	7	2	5
2	9	4	7	8	5	1	6	3
9	8	1	2	3	6	5	4	7
4	6	7	1	5	8	2	3	9
5	2	3	4	9	7	6	1	8

Difficulty Level ★★★★★

FOUNDATION FOR LAY EDUC

(a World Heart Federation A

in partnership with the Dept. of Health, Dept. of Education and Dept. of Interior and Local Government and with the support of the P

7TH National Annual Conv

Theme: "Issues and Concerns in Pr

January 25-27, 2007, Carlos P. Romulo Audito

Foundation for Lay Education on Heart Diseases

A Profile

By: Adolfo B. Bellosillo, MD, FACC, FSGC, FPCC, FPCP, FPCCP
Founding President, FLEHD

INTRODUCTION

At no time in the history of medicine and coronary artery disease has prevention been recognized and highlighted as in the early seventies when the World Health Organization issued the following statement: "Coronary artrery disease has reached enormous proportion, striking more and more at younger subjects. It will result in the greatest epidemic mankind has faced unless we are able to reverse it by concentrated research into its cause and prevention."

That epidemic, indeed, has come!

Globally, 50 million die each year, 40% of which are coronary and 50% when one includes hypertension and stroke.

In the Philippines, since the early nineties, heart disease has become the number cause of death among Filipinos.

Despite the medical and surgical advances, 60% of deaths occur suddenly. Among the survivors, 30% die while in the hospital and the recurrence rate of heart attack remains high.

Why prevention?

The cost of medical care is staggering and astronomical making good medical care beyond the reach of the general population. In the U.S. and Canada, the decline in death rate is attributed to change in life style which involves control of hypertension, maintaining cholesterol and sugar at normal level, smoking avoidance and cessation, physical activities, and stress management.

Life style change calls for active involvement of the person in preventive program. And active participation gets maximized only if he is educated on matters pertaining to the heart.

Who is to educate him?

Us, physicians, of course.

But do we?

Picture an office of a busy physician or cardiologist. In the midst of silence, while a patient anxiously waits with bated breath for that sum total of the doctor's professional fee and other charges, suddenly you hear the receptionist yell "next".

While the word "next" may just what most would welcome to hear, it does not allow the patient to get to know the diagnosis of his case, the nature of his ailment, the factors that contribute to the development of the disease, the situations that trigger an attack, the treatment options and possible side effects, etc. The word does not give the physician some moments to explain in simple language the above and for the patient to ask questions.

These apparent lapses in communication between patient and physician are not all that strange nor unheard of, only for a different reason or situation.

In the not so distant past, a patient surviving a heart attack, was kept in the dark as to what he was suffering from. It was feared then that the information could trigger another cardiac event, complications, if not sudden death.

But the age of cardiovascular mysticism has long been gone.

Today, the patient is told of everything there is to know in regard to his disease because success in the management of a cardiovascular case involves understanding and participation of the patient in his overall medical care. This, in turn, requires dialogue and communication between patient and his physician.

Regretfully, in this age of patient population explosion, in the present era of fast moving and high technology developments, often times the patients are told just to take the prescribed medications and to come back after a time for follow up.

The education of the public on matters pertaining to the heart has long been advocated by the World Heart Federation which must be extended to all regardless of nationality, creed, color or economic situation in life.

While institutions, agencies, organizations (both governmental and private) as well as civic organizations may very well have education of the public as one of their sworn functions, they are often defaulting for logistical reason, time constraint, inadequate number of personnel trained in the art of communications, priorities, etc.

Interestingly, while Filipinos can proudly claim that we are just about at par with our counterparts in the western countries in terms of knowledge and advances in the medical and surgical management of cardiovascular diseases, the same cannot be said of the practice of preventive cardiology.

Many an hour is spent, and for so often, on conferences, conventions, seminars, symposia and scientific meetings on what is new in the management of hypertension and coronary artery disease, sadly, none so far has been devoted to prevention of cardiovascular problems.

Attempts are made to educate the public. But these have been too few and far between with no serious gesture to reach out to all sector of society.

The past decade saw the proliferation of cardiovascular subspecialty societies but never has there been one with education as its primary goal.

Time can't wait and something had to be done!

THE BIRTH OF THE FOUNDATION

It was then in the dead of winter, while walking desolately the entertainment streets of New York City that the thought of organizing a foundation solely addressing the matter of education of the Filipino community in regard to heart diseases dawned on me.

Thus, during the closing ceremony of the 5th National Annual Convention of the Cardiac Rehabilitation Society on the 6th of February, 1999, the idea was announced.

The Philippine Securities and Exchange Commission stamped its seal of approval giving the Foundation a legal personality on September 2, 1999.

And in the midst of the 7th World Congress of Cardiac Rehabilitation and Secondary Prevention held at the Philippine International Convention Center, the Foundation was formally launched on February 22, 2000 graced by luminaries and world authorities on preventive cardiology.

THE PERSONALITIES BEHIND THE FOUNDATION

The governing body of the Foundation is a Board composed of formidable trustees headed by Mr. Jose S. Concepcion as chairman, with Mrs. Chito Madrigal Collantes, Mrs. Imelda O. Cojunngco, Mrs. Nellie U. Bengzon, Dr. Alberto G. Romulo, Mr. Johnny T. Litton, Mrs. Marixi Rufino Prieto, Dr Adolfo B. Bellosillo and Dr. Norbert Lingling Uy, as members.

The executive committee is headed by Founding President Dr. Adolfo B. Bellosillo supported by Dr. Vincent Valencia as secretary, Dr. Eleanor Lopez as tresurer, and Dr. Alberto Atilano, Ms Chichi Laperal, Dr. Efren Vicaldo and Dr. Ken Villanueva.

Recognizing the facilitating and coordinating rules that certain governmental agencies may play in the conduct of the activities of the Foundation, partnership with the Department of Health, the Department of Education and the Department of Interior and Local Government was sought resulting in the signing of a memorandum of agreement on July 30, 2001 with Dr. Manuel Dayrit (Health), Hon. Raul Roco (Education) and Hon. Jose Lina (DILG).

A body of regional consultants composed of Mrs. Letty Syquia, Mrs. Ces Manalo and Mr. Mars Lambino was organized to lend support to the provincial activities of the Foundation.

THE FOUNDATION FACULTY

Recruiting volunteers gifted with thorough knowledge of heart diseases and effective communication skills resulted in a faculty of:

1. Adoracion Nambayan Abad, MD
2. Joel Abanilla, MD
3. Angelita Aguirre, MD
4. Alberto Atilano, MD
5. Adolfo Bellosillo, MD
6. Leandro Bongosia, MD
7. Virgith Buena, RND
8. Eduardo Caguioa, MD
9. Jaime Cayetano, MD
10. Freman Cerezo, MD
11. Roland de los Reyes, MD
12. Achilles Esguerra, MD
13. Pearl Esguera, RND
14. Ruby Franc, RND
15. Marie Simonette Ganzon, MD
16. Helen Ong Garcia, MD
17. Saturnino Javier, MD
18. May Ann Lao, MD
19. Eleanor Lopez, MD
20. Mariano Lopez, MD
21. Ophelia Manlapit, MD
22. Donato Maranon, MD
23. Jovy Martillos, RND
24. Florante Munoz, MD
25. Ruben Ortega, MD
26. Perfecto Palafox, MD
27. Imelda Peralta, RND
28. Cesar Recto II, MD
29. Noel Rosas, MD
30. Diana Jean Roxas, MD
31. Jose Sanchez, MD
32. Elson Sedilla, MD
33. Vivian Serrano, MD
34. Edwin Tucay, MD
35. Milagros Uy, MD
36. Norberto Lingling Uy, MD
37. Zenaida Uy, MD
38. Vincent Valencia, MD
39. Efren Vicaldo, MD
40. Ken Villanueva, MD
41. Eloisa Villaraza, RND
42. Edwin Wenceslao, MD

FOUNDATION FOR LAY EDUCATION ON HEART DISEASES, INC.

BOARD OF TRUSTEES

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Chairman

Dr. Adolfo B. Bellosillo
President

Members

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Mrs. Imelda O. Cojuangco

Mrs. Nellie U. Bengzon

Dr. Alberto G. Romulo

Mr. Johnny T. Litton

Mrs. Marixi Rufino Prieto

Dr. Perfecto O. Palafox

ACTIVITIES OF THE FOUNDATION

As of this date, October 31, 2006, 6 years and 8 months after its launching, the Foundation has conducted the following:

I Public Forum - 180

This is for the general public which usually lasts for 4 hours, either in the morning or in the afternoon. The topics discussed are:

a. "Know Your Heart And How It Works"
b. "How Do I Know I Am Having A Heart Attack?"
c. "The Risk Factors for Atherosclerosis"
d. "Cholesterol: The Good and The Bad"
e. "Hypertension: The Silent Killer"
f. "Smoke Gets In Your Heart"
g. "Exercise To Your Heart's Content"
h. "Sex And The Heart: Fact And Fiction"

2. Barangay Health Workers Workshop - 16

The Barangay Health Workers are in the forefront in disseminating health information. In a survey conducted by the Foundation in regard to the basic knowledge of the BH workers on matters pertaining to the heart, the result showed higher average scores obtained by the general public. Because of this, FLEHD started to conduct workshops on Preventive Cardiology to get them oriented and their knowledge updated. Interestingly, the health workers displayed great capacity to learn when given access to the right information as shown in the remarkably high average scores after the lectures on cardiovascular diseases. This is usuallyconducted for no less than one whole day and no more than two days. The curriculum consists of the above 8 topics in the Public Forum plus the following topics:

a. "Rheumatic Fever and Rheumatic Heart Disease"
b. "Life Cannot Be Sweet If You Are A Diabetic"
c. "The Longer The Waistline, The Shorter The Life Span"

3. Senior Citizens Seminar on Preventive Cardiology - 7

The Filipino population is getting older. Beyond age 65 about the most common health problems encountered are hypertension and coronary artery disease.

The core curriculum for this group essentially consists of those i In the Public Forum, plus Diabetes and Obesity and:

a. "Medications Used For Hypertension and Coronary Artery Disease"
b. "Alternative Forms of Management for Patients Significant Coronary Obstruction"
c. "Helping The Male Cardiac Patient Make It Through the iii Night (Erectile Dysfunction)"

4. Annual National Convention on Preventive Cardiology - 6 (for physicians)

The developments in the field of Cardiology have grown on a fast pace. To keep the physicians abreast with newer knowledge, latest technology, new approaches to cardiovascular problems, controversies, etc. FLEHD conducts every last week of January a national annual convention.

5. Annual Regional Assembly on Preventive Cardiology - 5 (also for physicians)

Realizing that many physicians find it difficult to come to Manila for the national conventions, FLEHD conducts assemblies in the different regions of the country.

The topics taken up are usually the same as those in the annual conventions.

6. Annual Oratorical Contest - 3

on the theme: "Preventive Cardiology: Its Time Has Come And Act We Must Now"

This is usually conducted among medical students in the different medical schools in Metro Manila to create awareness among them of the importance of Preventive Cardiology as a big factor in slashing cardiovascular mortality and morbidity.

NOTE: In all the above activities, the participants and the attendees are NOT charged registration fees at all.

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Mrs. Ch
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Mrs. Im
Mr. Joh
Dr. Al
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Cordiller
Marc
ADVISO

FOUNDATION FOR LAY EDUCATION ON HEART DISEASES, INC.

SUMMARY OF ACTIVITIES

I PUBLIC FORUM ON "THE HEART"

1. College Assurance Plan	May 3, 2000
2. RFM Corporation	June 9, 2000
3. Department of Tourism	July 12, 2000
4. Department of Health	July 28, 2000
5. Cultural Center of the Philippines	August 18, 2000
6. Dept. of Education, Culture and Sports	August 21, 2000
7. Philippine National Bank	September 15, 2000
8. PAGCOR	October 27, 2000
9. Dept. of Interior and Local Government	November 6, 2000
10. Philippine Charity Sweepstakes Office	November 10, 2000
11. Department of Foreign Affairs	February 14, 2001
12. Valle Verde V Homeowners Association	March 3 & 4, 2001
13. Valle Verde II Homeowners Association	March 11, 2001
14. Development Bank of the Philippines	April 25, 2001
15. Department of Finance	May 4, 2001
16. Dept. of Social Welfare and Development	May 30, 2001
17. Central Bank of the Philippines (Main)	June 13, 2001
18. Assoc. of Generals and Flag Officers (AFP)	July 6, 2001
19. Malacanang	August 6, 2001
20. Department of Agrarian Reforms	September 3, 2001
21. Department of Agriculture	September 24, 2001
22. Central Bank of the Philippines (QC)	September 28, 2001
23. National Library	October 26, 2001
24. National Conference of Public Librarians	November 8, 2001
25. Bureau of Customs	November 9, 2001
26. Civil Service Commission	November 16, 2001
27. Executives of Ayala Corporation	November 23, 2001
28. Miriam College	November 29, 2001
29. The Shrine, Mary Help of Christians	December 15, 2001
30. The Roman Catholic Archbishopric of Manila	January 11, 2002
31. Pampanga Provincial Government	January 14, 2002
32. Makati Medical Center	February 9, 2002
33. Industrial Technology Institute	February 14, 2002
34. Department of Health	February 22, 2002
35. Technological, Educational, Skills Development Authority	March 8, 2002
36. Rotary District 3780, Rotary of Metro Sta. Mesa	March 9, 2002
37. City of Manila Government	March 13, 2002
38. Ayala Land, Inc. (Onstage)	April 21, 2002
39. Batangas Provincial Government	April 22, 2002
40. Batangas City Government	May 3, 2002
41. Greenhills Christian Fellowship	May 18, 2002
42. Cavite Provincial Government	June 7, 2002
43. Pasay City Government	June 10, 2002
44. Fort Bonifacio Officers Club	October 7, 2002
45. St. Mathew College (San Mateo, Rizal)	October 12, 2002
46. Central Post Office	November 8, 2002
47. Presidential Security Group	November 11, 2002
48. National Convention of Public Librarians	November 20, 2002
49. Daughters' of St. Paul (Pasay City)	November 25, 2002
50. St. Scholastica College	December 16, 2002
51. Congregation of the Pious Disciples of the Divine Master	January 25, 2003
52. Philippine Air Force	January 27, 2003
53. RMN Radio Station (c/o Gov. Maliksi of Cavite)	February 2, 2003
54. PNCC Skyway Corporation	February 14, 2003
55. U.P. College of Human Kinetics	February 18, 2003
56. Las Pinas City Health Office	February 24, 2003
57. Congressional Ladies Assn. of the Phil.	March 5, 2003
58. Cavite Provincial Health Office	April 23, 2003
59. Phil. Charity Sweepstakes Office	April 25, 2003
60. Congressman Ernesto Echiverri District of Caloocan	May 16, 2003
61. VRP Medical Center	May 22, 2003
62. Phil. Fisheries Development Authority	June 2, 200[illegible]
63. Colegio de San Lorenzo	June 5, 2003
64. Schools' Division Superintendent, Makati	July 3, 2003
65. Laguna Medical Society, Governor Ningning Lazaro	July 5, 2003
66. Provincial Government of Pangasinan	July 12, 2003
67. Schools' Division Superintendent, Mandaluyong	July 15, 2003
68. School's Division Superintendent, Pasig & San Juan	July 17, 2003
69. Far Eastern University	July 24, 2003
70. School's Division Superintendent, Caloocan City	July 31, 2003
71. Phil. School of Business Administration	August 8, 2003
72. Norwegian Missionary Alliance (Rizal)	August 14, 2003
73. Pleasant Mount School, Antipolo City	August 16, 2003
74. Mapua Institute of Technology	August 21, 2003
75. U.P. (Los Banos) and International Rice Research Institute Faculty	August 23, 2003
76. Our Lady of Perpetual Succor, Marikina City	August 28, 2003
77. Rotary Club District 3780, R.C. of Metro Sta. Mesa	August 30, 2003
78. Santa Cruz, Laguna (Santa Cruz Medical Society)	September 13, 2003
79. Department of Agriculture	September 16, 2003
80. Quota International (Correctional Inst. For Women)	September 18, 2003
81. Cabuyao, Laguna (Cabuyao Medical Society)	September 20, 2003
82. Women's Association for Vicente Eusebio (WAVE)	September 22, 2003
83. Philippine Medical Association (Quezon City)	September 25, 200
84. San Pedro, Laguna (San Pedro Medical Society)	September 27, 2003
85. Pasiguena Organization for Women Empowerment and Recognition (POWER)	September 29, 2003
86. Lyceum of the Philippines	September 30, 2003
87. Department of Agrarian Reforms	October 1, 2003
88. Eulogio Rodriquez Inst. of Science and Technology	October 2, 2003
89. International Rice Research Institute (for employees)	October 16, 2003
90. Mapua Institute of Technology, Makati City	October 29, 2003
91. Sta. Rosa Medical Society	October 30, 2003
92. TEMIC Automotive Philippines	November 8, 2003
93. St. Paul's College of Manila	November 10, 2003
94. Diabetic Club, Alfonso, Cavite	November 12, 2003
95. Star of Hope	November 13, 2003
96. Roxas City	November 15, 2003
97. Immaculate Concepcion of Antipolo	November 21, 2003
98. Binan Medical Society	November 25, 2003
99. Macabebe, Pampanga	November 28, 2003
100. Quota International, Rotary Club of Ortigas Center and RFM Corporation	November 29, 2003
101. National Economic Development Authority	December 10, 2003
102. Bulacan State University	December 12, 2003
103. Angeles, Pampanga	December 13, 2003
104. Sariaya Medical Society	December 15, 2003
105. Healthline and DZEC	December 20, 2003
106. Rotary Club of Makati North	January 28, 2004
107. Church of Risen Lord, Diliman, Q.C.	February 7, 2004
108. Lucena, Quezon	February 13, 2004
109. Rotary Club of Makati South	February 16, 2004
110. Rotary Club of Ortigas Center	February 19, 2004
111. Central Bank of the Philippines in Q.C.	February 20, 2004
112. Young Once of Blue Ridge, Q.C.	February 21, 2004
113. Dagupan City	March 5, 2004
114. University of the Philippines, Los Banos, Laguna	March 13, 2004
115. Manila Polo Club	March 16, 2004
116. Tayabas, Quezon	March 21, 2004
117. Lucban, Quezon	April 24, 2004
121. Colegio de San Lorenzo, Quezon City	May 17, 2004
122. Our Lady of Perpetual Succor College, Marikina City	June 2, 2004
123. St. Mary Magdalene Parish Magdalena, Laguna	June 5, 2004
124. Center for Health Dev. Cordillera Administrative Division, Baguio City	June 11, 2004
125. General Agents and Management Associations	July 16, 2004
126. Santa Rosa, Laguna	July 23, 2004
127. Hope Christian Academy, Fairview, Quezon City	July 24, 2004
128. Colegio de la Purisima Concepcion, Roxas City	August 1, 2004
129. Camp Vicente Lim, Canlubang, Laguna	August 9, 2004
130. Rizal , Laguna Elemenatry School	August 17, 2004
131. Municipal Government of Sto.Tomas, Batangas	September 11, 2004
132. University of Makati	September 13, 2004
133. Dept. of Health, Baguio City	September 18, 2004
134. Quezon City Medical Society	September 21, 2004
135. Binmalay Senior Citizen, Binmalay, Pangasinan	September 30, 2004
136. Quezon Medical Society, Lucena City	October 2, 2004
137. Capiz State University, Roxas City	October 11, 2004
138. U.P. College of Medicine Employees	November 18, 2004
139. Senior Citizens Club of Urduja Village, Caloocan City	November 20, 2004
140. Laurel, Batangas	December 1, 2004
141. Valenzuela Health Office, Velenzuela City	December 6, 2004
142. Manila Health Department (Ospital Ng Maynila)	December 10, 2004
143. Salesian Corporators, Canlubang, Laguna	December 18, 2004
144. University of the Philippines in Baguio	February 11, 2005
145. Caloocan City Health Office	February 12, 2005
146. Cabuyao, Laguna	February 18, 2005
147. Manila City Hall	February 21, 2005
148. University of Makati	February 23, 2005
149. PTA of Claret School, Quezon City	February 25, 2005
150. Calamba, Laguna (Baringay Parian and Kalabro)	March 2, 2005
151. University of Rizal, Morong	March 18, 2005
152. Bureau of Soils and Water Management	April 6, 2005
153. Oroquieta, Misamis Occidental	April 9, 2005
154. National Council for the Disabled Persons	April 13, 2005
155. Kiwanis of San Pablo City, Laguna	May 3, 2005
156. Tanauan, Batangas	May 11, 2005
157. Silang, Cavite	May 17, 2005
158. University of the Philippines in the Visayas	June 17, 2005
159. Fire Fighters, Camp Vicente Lim, Canlubang, Laguna	June 29, 2005
160. St. Scholastica Academy, Bacolod City	July 16, 2005
161. Municipal Employees, Pagsanjan, Laguna	August 9, 2005
162. Philippine Medical Association, Quezon City	September 20, 2005
163. Center for Health Development, Quezon City	October 7, 2005
164. Church of the Risen Lord, UP Diliman, Quezon City	October 8, 2005
165. Manila Electric Company	October 24, 2005
166. F.M. Guerrero Elementary School, Paco, Manila	November 25, 2005
167. New Canosa School, Sta. Rosa, Laguna	December 17, 2005
168. De La Salle, Canlubang/Sta. Rosa, Laguna	February 10, 2006
169. Colegio de San Agustin, Binan, Laguna	February 18, 2006
170. Ligao City, Albay	April 2, 20006
171. Phil. Association of University Women (U.P. Chapter)	April 10, 12006
172. Insular Life, Muntinlupa City	April 17, 2006
173. Don Bosco, Canlubang, Laguna	April 26, 2006
174. Women's Guild of the Church of Risen Lord, Diliman, Quezon City	May 6, 2006
175. STI College, Canlubang, Laguna	May 10, 2006
176. Philippine Christian University, Taft Avenue	June 9, 2006
177. San Antoinio Parish, Forbes Park, Makati City	July 29, 2006
178. Association of Insurance Claimsmen, Phil. Columbian Association, Paco, Manila	September 1, 2006
179. Phil. Jaycee Senate, Iligan City	October 20, 2006
180. St. Louis University, Baguio City	November [illegible]

I TOPICS DISCUSSED DURING PUBLIC FORUM:

1. "Know Your Heart And How It Works"
2. "Heart Attack: How Do I Know I Am Having It"
3. "Hypertension: The Silent Killer"
4. "Cholesterol: The Good And The Bad"
5. "Smoke Gets In Your Heart"
6. "Exercise To Your Heart's Content"
7. "Sex And The Heart: Fact And Fiction"

EXTRA FREE SERVICES:

1. Blood Pressure Screening
2. Blood Examination for Sugar and Cholesterol
3. Electrocardiogram
4. Dietary Counseling
5. Medical Evaluation

II NATIONAL ANNUAL CONVENTIONS ON PREVENTIVE CARDIOLOGY

(For Physicians and Health Care Professionals)

1. First National Annual Convention on Preventive Cardiology
(theme: "Preventive Cardiology: Its Time Has Come")
Hotel Intercontinental, Makati City / August 23 - 24, 2001
2. Second National Annual Convention on Preventive Cardiology
(theme: Preventive Cardiology For All Health Care Professionals)
The National Library / January 17 - 18, 2002
3. Third National Annual Convention on Preventive Cardiology
(theme: "Slashing Cardiovascular Mortality and Morbidity the Preventive Cardiology Way")
January 16-17, 2003 ' Carlos P. Romulo Auditorium, RCBC Plaza Ayala Avenue Makati City
4. Fourth National Annual Convention on Preventive Cardiology
(theme: Risk Factor Modification for Effective Cardiovascular Motality and Morbidity Reduction")
January 22-23, 2004 / Carlos P. Romulo Auditorium, RCBC Plaza, Ayala Avenue
5. Fifth National Annual Convention on Preventive Cardiology
(theme: Preventive Cardiology for the Practicing Physicians)
January 27-29, 2005 / Carlos P. Romulo Auditorium
RCBC Plaza, Ayala Avenue, Makati City
6. Sixth National Annual Convention on Preventive Cardiology
January 26-28, 2006 / Carlos P. Romulo Auditorium
RCBC Plaza, Ayala Avenue, Makati City
7. Seventh National Annual Convention on Preventive Cardiology
(theme: Issues and Concerns in Preventive Cardiology in the Elderly") / January 25-27, 2007
Carlos P. Romulo Auditorium / RCBC Plaza, Ayala Avenue, Makati City

III REGIONAL ASSEMBLIES ON PREVENTIVE CARDIOLOGY

(For physicians and health care professionals)

1. First Regional Assembly on Preventive Cardiology
Region VI - Roxas City / College Assurance Auditorium / June 1 - 2, 2002
2. Second Regional Assembly on Preventive Cardiology
July 10 - 11, 2003 / Pangasinan Regency Hotel / Calasiao, Pangasinan
3. Third Regional Assembly on Preventive Cardiology
June 25-26, 2004 / Splash Mountain Resort / Los Banos, Laguna
4. Fourth Regional Assembly on Preventive Cardiology
June 21-22, 2005 / CAP-John Hay Convention Center Baguio City
5. Fifth Regional Assembly on Preventive Cardiology
June 5-6, 2006 / Sugarland Hotel, Bacolod City

IV BARANGAY HEALTH WORKERS WORKSHOP ON PREVENTIVE CARDIOLOGY

ATION ON HEART DISEASES, INC.

ssociate National Member)

il: Charity Sweepstakes Office and PAGCOR promoting the **Healthy Life Style Advocacy Program** of the Philippine Heart Association

ention on Preventive Cardiology

eventive Cardiology In the Elderly"

rium, RCBC Plaza, Ayala Avenue, Makati City

NDATION FOR LAY EDUCATION ON HEART DISEASES, INC.

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Atty. Roman Romulo

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Capiz
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Iloilo
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amis Occidental
Faith Go, MD

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Accreditation
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Program
Mawi de Mesa (Pfizer)

Convention Kits
Rudy Verano (Folares)

Signage
Cecil Jucaban (Boehringer Ingelheim)

SPEAKERS

io Lingling Uy
Bellosillo
Atilano
o Bongosia
osas
icaldo
lenn Jacoba
Estepar
Santos
or Lopez
11. Christina Puey
12. Francisco Maleza
13. Vesper Ramos
14. Edwin Wenceslao
15. Enrique del Fuerte
16. Roberto del Rosario
17. Luz Maapni
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23. Cesar Recto II
24. Saturnino Javier
25. Belen Carisma
26. Elson Sedilla
27. Erdie Fadequilan
28. Anthony Gebusion
29. Ken Villanueva
30. Zenaida Uy

irst Barangay Health Workers Workshop on Preventive Cardiology
ober 26 - 27, 2004 / Sta. Cruz Cultural Center Sta. Cruz, Laguna
econd Barangay Health Workers Workshop on Preventive Cardiology
il 18-19, 2005 / Convention Center Dagupan City
hird Barangay Health Workers Workshop on Preventive Cardiology
18 - 19, 2005 / LCC Auditorium / Calamba, Laguna
ourth Barangay Health Workers Workshop on Preventive Cardiology
25-26, 2005 / CAP Auditorium, Lipa City, Batangas
ifth Barangay Health Workers Workshop on Preventive Cardiology
ust 22-23, 2005 / Agno Valley College, Malasiqui, Pangasinan
ixth Barangay Health Workers Workshop on Preventive Cardiology
tember 19, 2005 / Iloilo Provincial Capitol, Iloilo City
eventh Barangay Health Workers Workshop on Preventive Cardiology
ober 3-4, 2005 / Baguio General Hospital, Baguio City
igth Barangay Health Workers Workshop on Preventive Cardiology
ber 10-11, 2005 / Provincial Capitol Social Hall, Roxas City, Capiz
Nineth Barangay Health Workers Workshop on Preventive Cardiology
ember 7-8, 2005 / Alaminos, Pangasinan
Tenth Barangay Health Workers Workshop on Preventive Cardiology
ember 28-29, 2005 / Naguilian Civic Center, Naguilian, La Union
Eleventh Barangay Health Workers Workshop on Preventive Cardiology
uary 9, 2006 / CAP Auditorium, Balayan, Batangas
Twelfth Barangay Health Workers Workshop on Preventive Cardiology
uary 18 and January 30, 2006 / Amoranto Stadium, Quezon City
Thirteenth Barangay Health Workers Workshop on Preventive Cardiology
ch 7, 2006 / Ormoc Superdome, Ormoc City
Fourteenth Barangay Health Workers Workshop on Preventive Cardiol-
Aguinaldo, Ifugao
Fifteenth Barangay Health Workers Workshop on Preventive Cardiology
l Technological University, Mandaluyong City
Sixteenth Barangay Health Workers Workshop on Preventive Cardiology
incial Capitol, Bacolod City

ENIOR CITIZENS SEMINAR ON PREVENTIVE CARDIOLOGY

irst Senior Citizens Seminar on Preventive Cardiology
ruary 20, 2006 / Dagupan City
econd Senior Citizens Seminar on Preventive Cardiology
ch 16-17, 2006 / Calamba City
hird Senior Citizens Seminar on Preventive Cardiology
ch 20, 2006 / Caloocan City
ourth Senior Citizens Seminar on Preventive Cardiology
2, 2006 / Lipa City
ifth Senior Citizens Seminar on Preventive Cardiology
2, 2006 / Oroquieta City
ixth Senior Citizens Seminar on Preventive Cardiology
8-9, 2006 / CAP Building, Roxas City
eventh Senior Citizens Seminar on Preventive Cardiology
26, 2006 / Provincial Capitol, Iloilo City

LEHD FACULTY SEMINARS

LEHD Faculty Seminar
ust 14-15, 2004 / Oasis Hotel, Los
s, Laguna
LEHD Faculty Seminar
ber 23, 2004 / Splash Mountain
rt, Los Banos Laguna
LEHD Faculty Seminar
ember 14, 2004 / Baguio City
LEHD Faculty Seminar
1, 2005 / Taal, Batangas

5. FLEHD Faculty Seminar
May 13, 2005 / Los Banos, Laguna

V OTHER ACTIVITIES

1. Symposium on Geriatric Cardiology
February 16, 2005 / Punta Villa
Arevalo, Iloilo
2. Seminar on Preventive Cardiology
April 22, 2005
Municipal Health Officers

7th ANNUAL CONVENTION ON PREVENTIVE CARDIOLOGY
Issues and Concerns in Preventive Cardiology in the Elderly

Programme

Day 1
Thursday
January 25, 2007

0730 – 0800 REGISTRATION
VISIT THE EXHIBITS
SYMPOSIUM I
General Issues
Chair: Annie Urmaza, MD (FLEHD CAR Chapter)
0800 – 0830 Demographics of Aging — Norbert Lingling Uy, MD
0830 – 0900 The Aging Process and Its Cardiovascular Consequences — Adolfo Bellosillo, MD
0900 – 0930 Extra Cardiovascular Pathologies In Aging — Alberto Atilano, MD
0930 – 1000 OPEN FORUM — Adoracion Nambayan Abad, MD, Moderator
1000 – 1030 STRESS DOWNLOAD — GARSWORTH
VISIT THE EXHIBITS
SYMPOSIUM II
Specific CV Diseases Prevalent In The Elderly, Part I
Chair: Antonio Chua, MD (FLEHD Laguna Chapter)
1030 – 1100 Systolic Hypertension — Leandro Bongosia, MD
1100 - 1130 Coronary Heart Disease: Stable Syndrome — Anthony Gebusion, MD (FLEHD Negros Occ. Chapter)
1130 – 1200 Coronary Heart Disease: Unstable Syndrome — Efren Vicaldo, MD
1200 – 1230 OPEN FORUM — Perfecto Palafox, MD, Moderator
1230 - 1330 LUNCH — PASCUAL
VISIT THE EXHIBITS
SYMPOSIUM III
Common Risk Factors In The Elderly And Their Management, Part I
Chair: Ofelia Samar Sy, MD (FLEHD Albay Chapter)
1330 – 1400 The Low Density Lipoproteins: The Role Of Statins — Kurt Glenn Jacoba, MD
1400 – 1430 Fibers In The Management of Dyslipidemias — Robert Estepar, MD (FLEHD Iloilo Chapter)
1430 - 1500 Lowering of Triglycerides and Preventing Sudden Cardiac Death — Romeo Santos, MD
1500 - 1530 OPEN FORUM — Vivian Serrano, MD, Moderator
1530 - 1600 STRESS DOWNLOAD — NATRAPHARMA
VISIT THE EXHIBITS
1600 CONVOCATION
Marshal — Regente Lapak, MD (FLEHD Laguna Chapter)

Entrance of Colors
Entrance of Chapter Presidents and Secretaries
Entrance of Convention Faculty
Entrance of FLEHD Officers
Entrance of Special Guests
Entrance of FLEHD Board of Trustees
Entrance of FLEHD Board Chairman and Guest of Honor
Invocation — Levi Tan, MD (FLEHD Leyte Chapter)
Pambansang Awit — Alberto Atilano, MD
FLEHD Prayer "Prayer To Serve" — Cesar Yap, MD (Capiz Chapter)
Francisco Maleza, MD (Negros Occidental Chapter)
Dexter Dale Briones, MD (Iloilo Chapter)
Atty. John Go, MD (Misamis Occidental Chapter)
FLEHD Hymn "Save Them We All Must Go" — Benbenato Garcia, MD (Batangas Chapter)
Marcelo Ugale Salango, MD (CAR Chapter)
Angelo Ante, MD (Albay Chapter)
Hilarion Maramba, Jr., MD (Pangasinan Chapter)
Antonio Chua, MD (Laguna Chapter)
Introduction of Guests — Otilia Garcia, MD (FLEHD Laguna Chapter)
Words of Welcome — Mr. Jose S. Concepcion, Chairman, FLEHD Board of Trustees
SOFA — Adolfo B. Bellosillo, MD, FLEHD President
INDUCTION OF: — Mr. Jose S. Concepcion
New President of FLEHD CAR Chapter — Atty. Roman Romulo
Officers and Faculty of FLEHD CAMANAVA Chapter
Officers and Faculty of FLEHD QUEZON
Officers and Faculty of FLEHD AGUSAN DEL NORTE Chapter
CITATIONS — Atty. Roman Romulo, Mr. Jose S. Concepcion
FLEHD Inspirational Songs — Ligao City (Albay) Choral Group
"The Impossible Dream"
You'll Never Walk Alone"
Introduction of the Guest of Honor — Ophelia Manlapit, MD
Address of the Guest of Honor — Dr. Alberto G. Romulo, Secretary, Dept. of Foreign Affairs
LIGAO City (Albay) Children's Choir — "When You Wish Upon A Star" "Happy Wanderer" "Getting To Know You" "Haw Haw Hee" "It's a Small World" "Tomorrow"

RECESSIONAL

Mr. JOHNNY LITTON
Emcee

Official Opening of the Exhibits — Mrs. Marixi Rufino Prieto, Mrs. Nellie Bengzon, Mrs. Letty Syquia, Mrs. Ces Manalo, Atty. Roman Romulo, Mr. Mars Lambino

Day 2
Friday
January 26, 2007

0730 REGISTRATION
VISIT THE EXHIBITS
SYMPOSIUM IV
Specific Diseases Prevalent in the Elderly, Part II
Chair: Leila Diaz, MD (Leyte Chapter)

0800 – 0830 Valvular Diseases — Eleanor Lopez, MD
0830 – 0900 Hypertrophic and Restrictive Cardiomyopathies — Christina Puey, MD (FLEHD Negros Occ. Chapter)
0900 – 0930 Heart Failure — Francisco Maleza, MD (FLEHD Negros Occ. Chapter)
0930 – 1000 OPEN FORUM — Jesus Canto, MD (FLEHD Pangasinan Chapter), Moderator
1000 – 1030 STRESS DOWNLOAD — BOEHRINGER INGELHEIM
VISIT THE EXHIBITS
Symposium V
Common Risk Factors In The Elderly, Part II
Chair: Arthur Pitargue, MD (FLEHD Pangasinan Chapter)
1030 – 1100 Medication-taking behavior among hypertensives — Vesper L. Ramos, MD
1100 – 1130 The Folic Acids and Vitamins — Edwin Wenceslao, MD
1130 - 1200 Obesity and Weight Control Clinic — Enrique del Fuerte, MD (FLEHD Laguna Chapter)
1200 – 1230 OPEN FORUM — Matias Apistar, MD (FLEHD Iloilo Chapter), Moderator
1230 - 1400 LUNCH — ROCHE
ENTERTAINMENT
VISIT THE EXHIBITS
PHILIPPINES, the Beautiful (Songs and Dances)
Ligao (Albay) Choral Group — "Aawitan Kita" "Bulong Bulongan" "Barong Tagalog"
Ifugao — Glenda Lumayna
Pangalatok — Hilarion Maramba, Jr., MD (FLEHD Pangasinan Chapter)
Tagalog — Ruben Lasala, MD
Waray — Manuel Aquino, MD (FLEHD Leyte Chapter)
Walay Angay — Cesar Yap, MD (FLEHD Capiz Chapter)
Dandansoy — Francisco Maleza, MD (FLEHD Negros Occ. Chapter)
Matudnila — Atty. John Go (FLEHD Misamis Occ. Chapter)
Ligao (Albay) Choral Group — "Arimunding Munding" Boses ni Lolo" "Sarong Banggi"

Nicolas Donato, MD
Otilia Garcia, MD
Emcees

SYMPOSIUM VI
Cardiovascular Diseases in the Different Phil. Regions: Prevalence, Prevention Programs and Problems
Chair: Ponciano Aberin, MD (CAMANAVA Chapter)
1400 – 1415 In Bicol — Roberto del Rosario, MD (FLEHD Albay Chapter)
1415 – 1430 In Western Visayas — Luz Maapni, MD (FLEHD Negros Occ. Chapter)
1430 – 1445 In Eastern Visayas — Chunito Yu, MD (FLEHD Leyte Chapter)
1445 – 1500 In Northwestern Mindanao — Faith Go, MD (FLEHD Misamis Occ. Chapter)
1500 – 1530 OPEN FORUM — Marcelino Ugale Salango MD (FLEHD CAR Chapter), Moderator
1530 - 1600 STRESS DOWNLOAD — PFIZER
VISIT THE EXHIBITS
SYMPOSIUM VII
Cardiovascular Drugs In The Elderly
Chair: Ruben Arcilla, MD (Misamis Occ. Chapter)
1600- 1630 Paving The Way For Beta Blockers In Early Chronic Heart Failure Management — Ken Villanueva, MD
1630 – 1700 Dyslipidemia and Hypertension: Increasing Risks of Cardiovascular Events — Vincent Valencia, MD
1700 – 1730 When Angiotensin II Receptor Blocker Becomes The Choice for Hypertension — Don Maranon, MD
1730 – 1800 OPEN FORUM — Mario Simonette Ganzon, MD, Moderator

Day 3
Saturday
January 27, 2007

0730 REGISTRATION
VISIT THE EXHIBITS
SYMPOSIUM VIII
Interventional Management of Coronary Events In The Elderly Population
Chair: Ruben Ortega, MD
0800 – 0830 Treatment of Non-ST Elevation in Acute Coronary Syndrome — Edwin Tucay, MD
0830 – 0900 Fibrinolytic Therapy for Acute S-T Elevation in Myocardial Infarction — Cesar Recto II, MD
0900 – 0930 Primary Percutaneous Coronary Intervention of Acute ST Elevation Myocardial Infarction — Saturnino Javier, MD
0930 – 1000 OPEN FORUM — Freman Cerezo, MD, Moderator
1000 – 1030 STRESS DOWNLOAD — BOOTS
VISIT THE EXHIBITS
SYMPOSIUM IX
Arrhythmias Prevalent In The Elderly
Chair: Marcelino Felisarta (Negros Occ. Chapter)
1030 – 1100 Atrial Dysrhythmias — Belen Carisma, MD
1100 – 1130 Ventricular Arrhythmias — Elson Sedilla, MD
1130 – 1200 Devices in Ventricular Arrhythmias — Erdie Fadreguilan, MD
1200 – 1230 OPEN FORUM — Diana Jean Roxas, MD, Moderator
1230 – 1400 LUNCH — THERAPHARMA
VISIT THE EXHIBITS
ENTERTAINMENT
LIGAO (Albay) Choral Group — FLEHD's "Song of Thanksgiving" "Somewhere Over The Rainbow" "Where Is Your Heart" "Sunrise, Sunset" "Smoke Gets in your HEART"
Alberto Atilano, MD
Enrique del Fuerte, MD
Cesar Yap, MD
Antonio Chua, MD
"To All The Girls I've Loved Before" "Danny Boy" "Como Te Amo" "Stout Hearted Men"

Community Singing
"Those Were The Days"
"I'm In The Mood for Love"
"Love Me The Way I Love You"
"Somewhere My Love"
"Hello Dolly"
"I Believe"
"Ako Ay Pilipino"

Jayme Viscayno, MD
Rosario Bernal, MD

SYMPOSIUM X
Other Issues and Concerns In The Geriatric Age Group
Chair: Luciano Fernandez, MD (FLEHD Pangasinan Chapter)
1400 – 1430 Hypertension and Coronary Artery Disease — Noel Rosas, MD
1430 – 1500 Targeting Hemodynamic Aberrations For Better Blood Pressure Control — Adolfo Bellosillo, MD
1500 – 1530 Cardiac Rehabilitation for the Elderly — Zenaida Uy, MD
1530 – 1600 OPEN FORUM — Cesar Yap, MD, Moderator
1600 – 1630 STRESS DOWNLOAD — FOLARES
VISIT THE EXHIBITS
1630 CLOSING CEREMONY
ORATORICAL CONTEST
"Preventive Cardiology: Its Time Has Come and Act We Must Now"
Invocation — Romulo del Rosario, MD (FLEHD Albay Chapter)
Pambansang Awit — Daffodil Avear (FLEHD Albay Chapter)
FLEHD Prayer "Prayer To Serve" — FLEHD Albay Chapter
FLEHD Hymn "Save Them We All Must Go" — FLEHD Albay Chapter
Introduction of Dignitaries and Guests — Ernesto Naval, Jr., MD, FLEHD Laguna Chapter
Words of Welcome — Mr. Jose S. Concepcion, Chair, FLEHD Board of Trustees
Introductory Remarks — Adolfo B. Bellosillo, MD, President, FLEHD
Rules of the Contest — Vincent Valencia, MD, Secretary, FLEHD
Introduction of the Board of Judges
Oratorical Contestant Finalist No. 1
Oratorical Contestant Finalist No. 2
Oratorical Contestant Finalist No. 3
Ligao (Albay) Children's Choir — "The Sound of Music" "Do Re Mi" "Supercalifragilisticexpealidocius"
Oratorical Contestant Finalist No. 4
Oratorical Contestant Finalist No. 5
Oratorical Contestant Finalist No. 6
LIGAO Children's Choir — "May The Good Lord Bless and Keep You" "Climb Every Mountain"
Announcement of Winners and Awarding of Prizes — Chairman, Board of Judges, Mr. Jose S. Concepcion
FLEHD Farewell Song — LIGAO Children's Choir, LIGAO Choral Group

Elizabeth Naval, MD
Dennis Labro, MD
EMCEE

FLEHD UPCOMING ACTIVITIES (January - March, 2007)

January 5, 2007
Organization of FLEHD Agusan del Norte Chapter (no. 14) based in Butuan City

January 13, 2007
19th Barangay Health Workers Workshop on Preventive Cardiology, Magdalena, Laguna

January 25-27, 2007
7th National Annual Convention on Preventive Cardiology, RCBC Plaza, Makati City

February 2, 2007
20th Barangay Health Workers Workshop on Preventive Cardiology, Caloocan City

February 10, 2007
8th Senior Citizens Seminar on Secondary CV Prevention, Amoranto Stadium, Quezon City

February 12, 2007
182nd Public Forum on the Heart, GSIS Building, Pasay City

February 16, 2007
21st Barangay Health Workers Workshop on Preventive Cardiology, Agoo, La Union

February 17, 2007
183 Public Forum on the Heart, Bethany Hospital, San Fernando, La Union

February 24, 2007
22nd Barangay Health Workers Workshop on Preventive Cardiology, Lucena, Quezon

February 26, 2007
184th Public Forum on the Heart, Phil. Association Of Professional Regulatory Board, Phil. Regulatory Board Building, Sampaloc, Manila

March 10, 2007
1st Care Givers Seminar on Preventive Cardiology, Health Care Ministry, Sanctuario de San Antonio, Forbes Park

March 31, 2007
185th Public Forum on the Heart, Butuan City, Agusan del Norte

A FLEHD PRAYER

"A PRAYER TO SERVE"

Words and music by: Jeremiah "Jimboy" Calisang

With much reverence
Lord, we come before Your throne.
We lift our weary hearts.
In You alone we call.
For strength and wisdom.

Lord, in You alone we trust.
Through You we shall prevail.
To do the best we can.
To serve Your children.

Chorus:
Bless our hearts, bless our souls.
Use us Lord, take control.
Let them feel Your love through our works.
And Your grace through our endeavors.
And this we pray in Your Most Holy Name!

Repeat:
Lord, we come before Your throne.
We lift our weary hearts.
In You alone we call.
For strength and wisdom.

Lord, in You alone we trust.
Through You we shall prevail.
To do the best we can.
To serve Your children.

Chorus:
Bless our hearts, bless our souls.
Use us Lord, take control.
Let them feel Your love through our works.
And Your grace through our endeavors.
And this we pray in Your Most Holy Name!

FLEHD Song of Thanksgiving

Music and Lyrics by Jeremiah Calisang

Joyfully, moderato

Now is the time to rejoice,
to celebrate what we have done.
We've won the mission to care,
for healthy hearts to prevail.

Let us celebrate, let us celebrate,
giving thanks to the Almighty One.
Let our hearts rejoice,
let our minds be one.
Keep our love and passion in flame ,
La la la la la la la
La la la la la la la la

Repeat:

Now is the time to rejoice,
to celebrate what we have done.
We've won the mission to care
for healthy hearts to prevail.

Let us celebrate, let us celebrate,
giving thanks to the Almighty One.
Let our hearts rejoice,
Let our minds be one
Keep our love and passion in flame.
La la la la la la la
La la la la la la la la

Let us celebrate, let us celebrate
Giving thanks to the Almighty One.
Let our hearts rejoice,
Let our minds be one
Keep our love and passion as one.
As one!

HAW HAW HEE

(Coronary risk factors multi-lingual poetry)

Musika ni: Jimboy Calisang

Titik ni: A. B. Bellosillo, MD

Haw Haw Hee
Hali kayo dini
Ng life style na healthy
Magtuturo kami.

Haw Haw Hee
Bawas, itlog, karni
Gulay, prutas, okay
Kayo ba intiendi?

Dapat presyon buti
Inum gamot lagi
'taki puso, no way.

Haw Haw Hee
Huwag hithit yosi
Osok kotse 'tabi
Puso saya, ole!

Haw haw Hee
'ksersays tayo pare
Sama rin ang mare
Gabi lang kung pwede.

Baywang mo ang laki
Bawas ang calorie
Buhay, haba't sexy.

Haw Haw Hee
Dyabetes mo sweety
Sukal limitahi
Sakit puso ini

Haw Haw Hee
Sakit dibdib ali?
Tingin doctor sigi
Para ma ECG

Kaya kinig sabi
Payo ng FLEHD, honey
Ani mong ang dami.

Haw Haw Hee
Titik ninong iri
Kanino pa, Hee Hee
Bellosillong MD

FLEHD FAREWELL SONG

Music and Lyrics by: Jeremiah Calisang

Tenderly, moderato
It has been a fruitful day
but its time to say goodbye.
We've learned a lot,
and gained the power to live a healthy life.

FLEHD will never cease to care,
and never tire to serve.
If we mount up with wings as eagles,
FLEHD will soar up high.

Farewell! Farewell!
'til we meet again.
May the bond we've shared
grow and never fail.

Farewell! Farewell!
This is not the end.
God will be our guide until the day
when we shall meet again.

REPEAT:
It has been a fruitful day
but its time to say goodbye.
We've learned a lot,
and gained the power to live a healthy life.

FLEHD will never cease to care,
and never tire to serve.
If we mount up with wings as eagles,
FLEHD will soar up high.

Farewell! Farewell!
'til we meet again.
May the bond we've shared
grow and never fail.

Farewell! Farewell!
This is not the end.
God will be our guide until the day
when we shall meet again.

God will be our guide until the day
when we shall meet again.
AGAIN!

THE FLEHD HYMN
SAVE THEM WE ALL MUST GO

Lyrics and Music by: Jimboy Calisang

Orchestration by: Arnel del Rosario

Off we now go in the blaze of day
fighting the battle row!
Millions of lives whose hearts have been drowned
Save them we all must go.

Teach all the people of the world
a life of strength and pow'r
An ounce of prevention's worth a pound of cure, now
Save them we all must go.

Chorus:
Save them we all must go
Serve them the weak and show
that the lifespan of the hearts will grow
Save them we all must go.

REPEAT
Off we now go in the blaze of day
fighting the battle row!
Millions of lives whose hearts have been drowned
Save them we all must go.

Teach all the people of the world
a life of strength and pow'r
An ounce of prevention's worth a pound of cure now
Save them we all must go.

Chorus:
Save them we all must go
Serve them the weak and show
that the lifespan of the hearts will grow
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Serve them the weak and show
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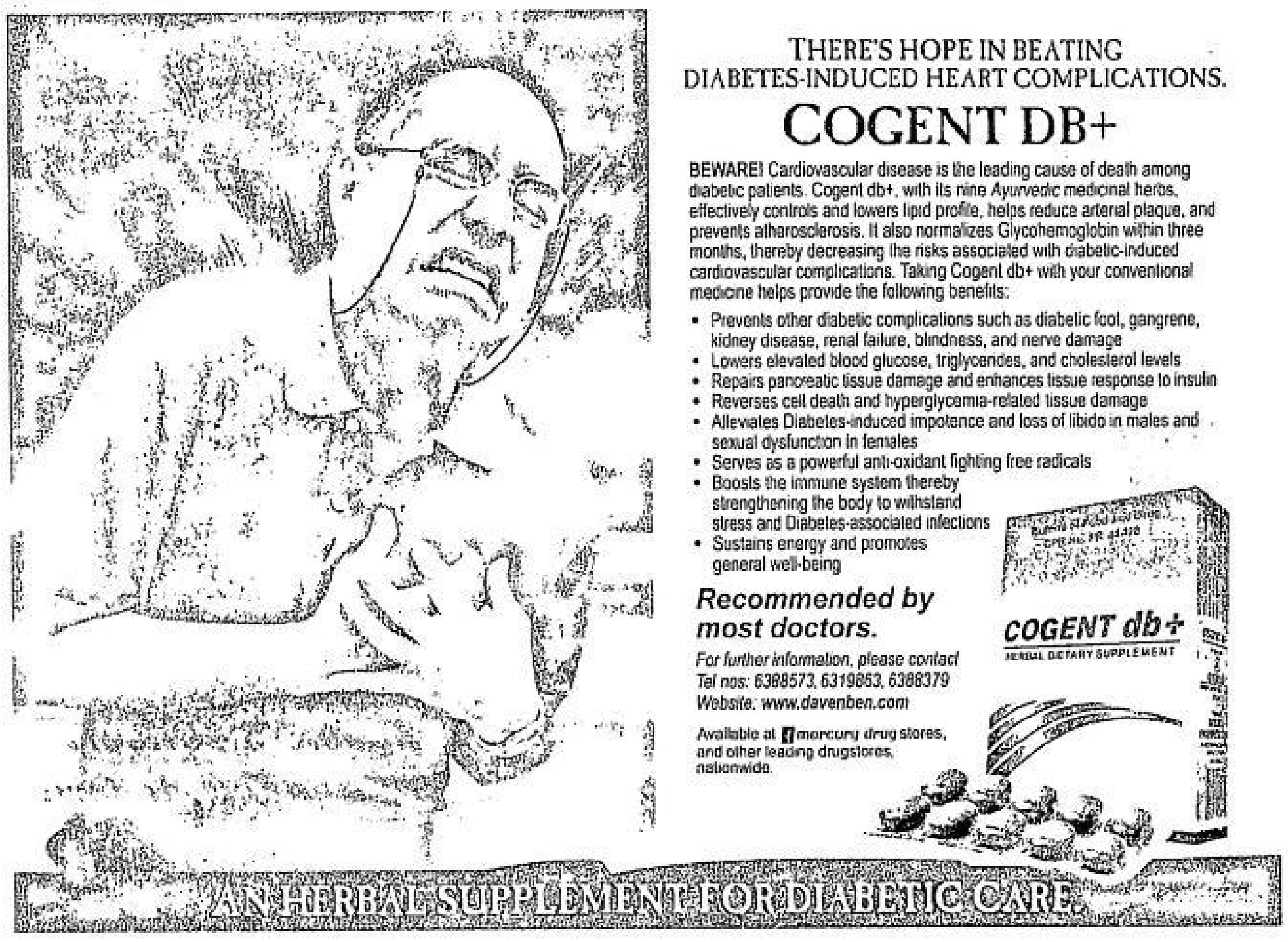
Save them we all must go.



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- Reverses cell death and hyperglycemia-related tissue damage
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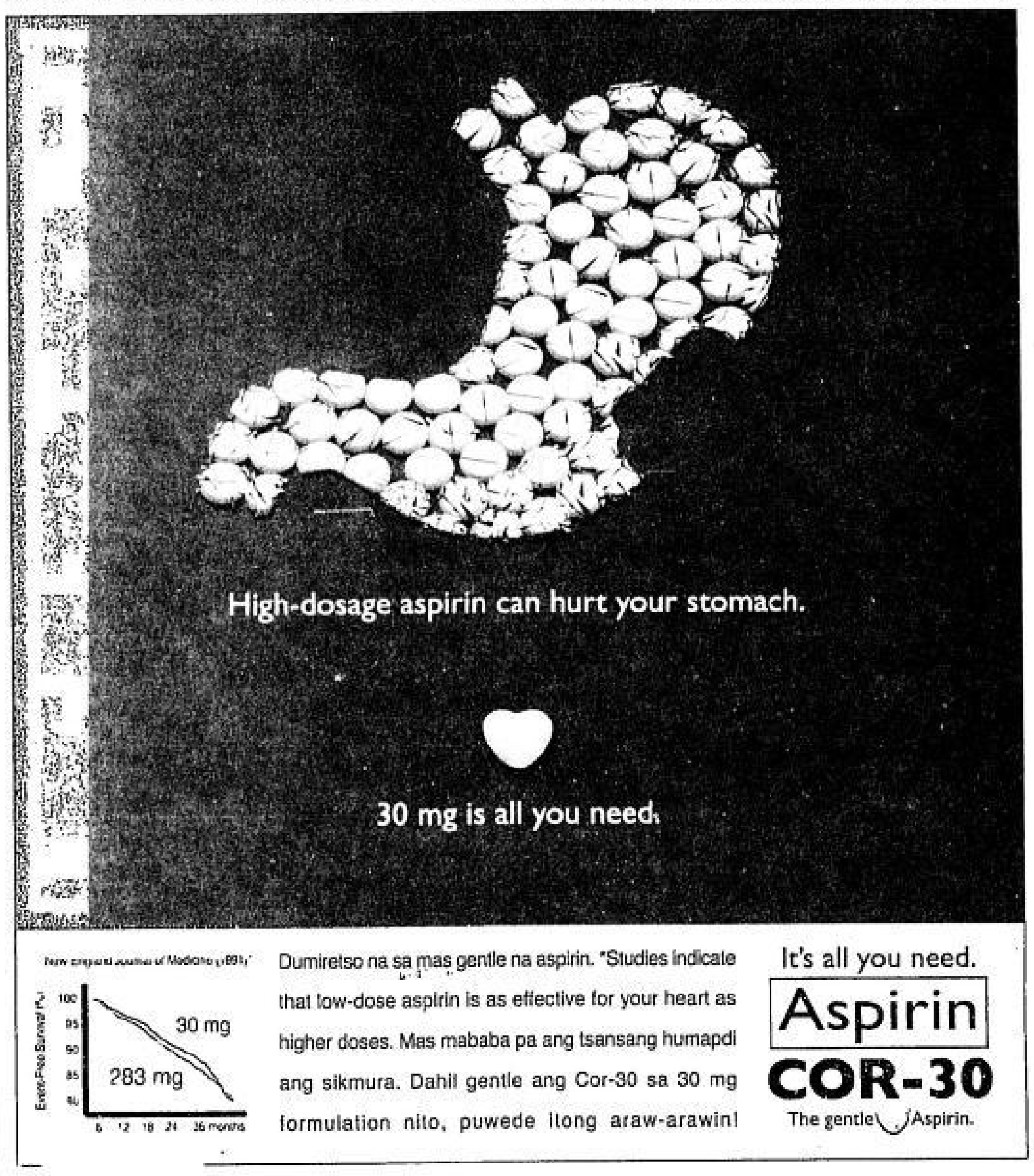

High-dosage aspirin can hurt your stomach.

30 mg is all you need.

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It's all you need.

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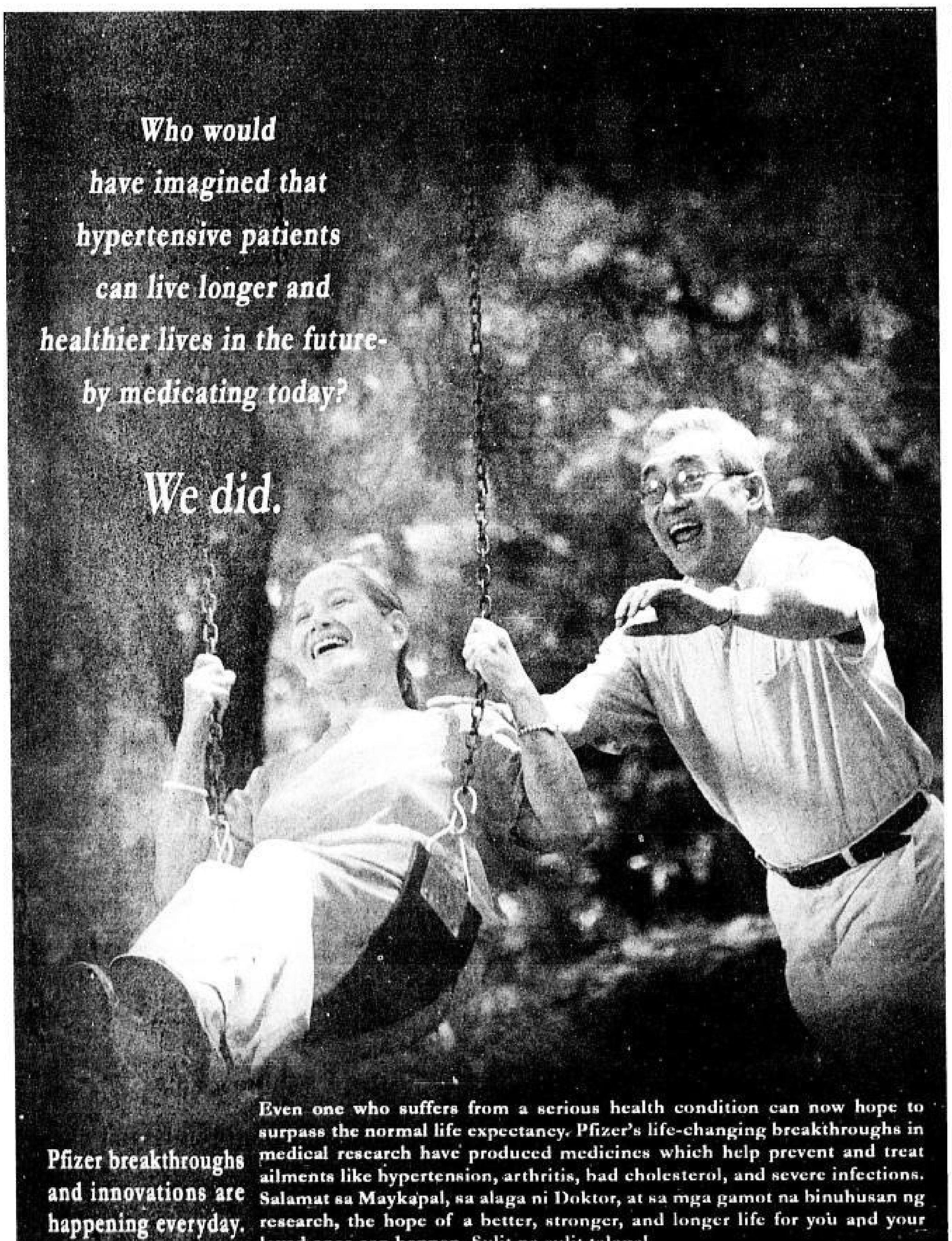
COR-30
The gentle Aspirin.



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Dapat Sulit.
Pfizer

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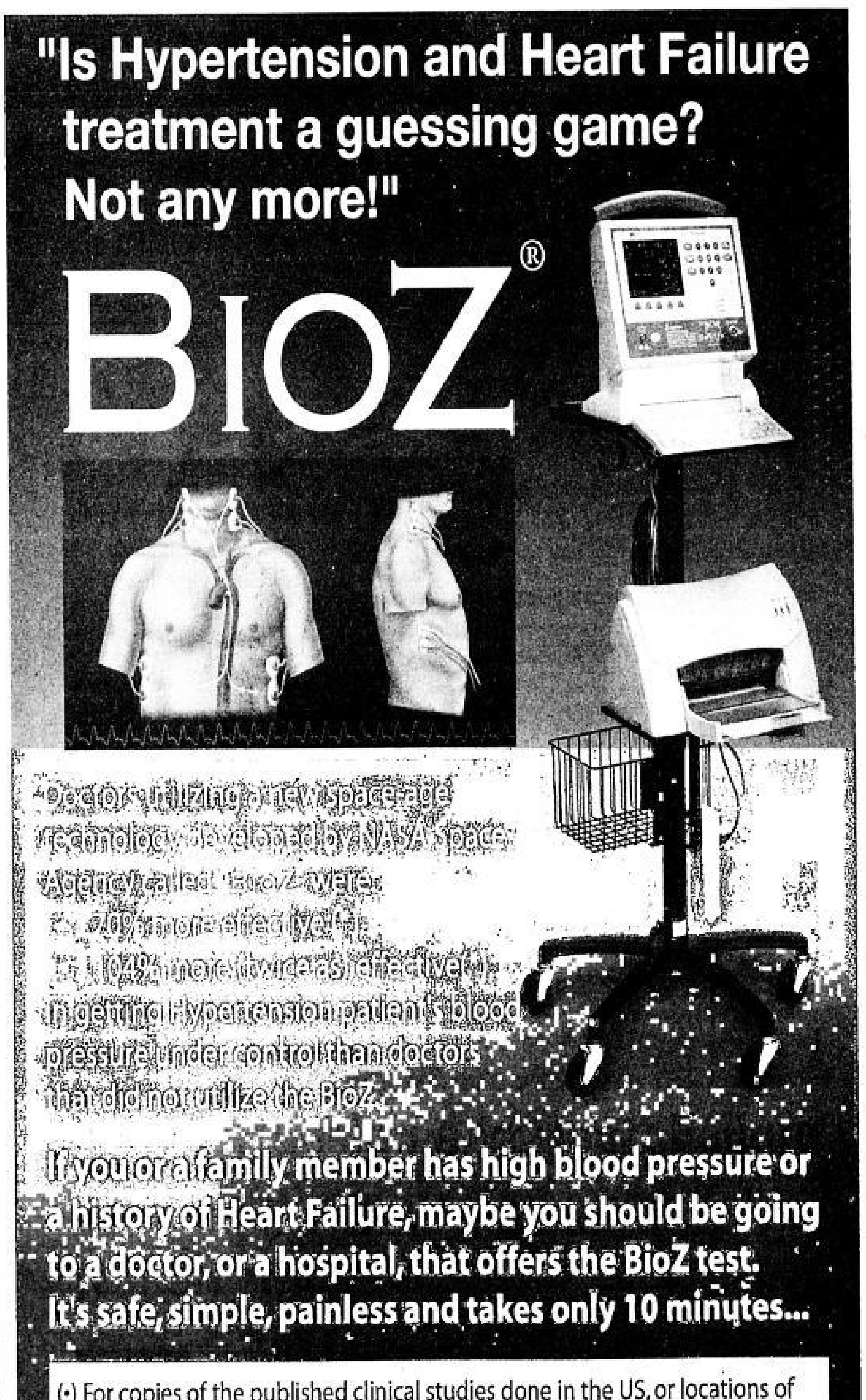

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104% more (twice as effective•)
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New Charlson Ong novel depicts Tsinoy identity

Charlson Ong
Banyaga
A SONG OF WAR

ANVIL PUBLISHING INC., IN cooperation with the UP Institute of Creative Writing, will launch award-winning fictionist Charlson Ong's newest novel, "Banyaga: A Song of War," Jan. 23, 6-10 p.m., at Conspiracy Bar in Quezon City.

The novel focuses on the lives of four immigrants and spans three generations of Chinese-Filipinos (Tsinoys) in the Philippines. It provides a window to the lives of contemporary Chinese Filipinos, with characters drawn with flair and candor as they cope with the conflict of tradition and modernity and the anxieties of urban living.

Ong succeeds in rewriting Philippine history from the point of view of the prototypical foreigner long deemed to have no place in the imagined Filipino community.

Caroline S. Hau, writer and literary critic, has this to say about the book: "'Banyaga's' unflinching and unforgettable portrait of three immigrants and their familial, business, romantic, political and social entanglements over eight decades effectively demystifies the lingering myth-understanding surrounding the 'Chinese.' But Ong's main achievement lies in his revelation of the wondrous alchemy that turns foreigner into Filipino and, just as important, Filipino into someone (and something) at once familiar and ineluctably foreign."

Charlson Ong has published three collections of short fiction: "Men of the East and Other Stories," "Woman of Amkaw and Other Stories," and "Conversion and Other Fictions"; and a novel, "Embarrassment of Riches." He was born, raised and continues to live in Manila, Philippines.

Call 6375692 or log on to www.anvilpublishing.com.

Bio of an officer and a gentleman

ACTA NON VERBA
Action Not Words
The Vicente Abad Perez Story
Nelson A. Navarro

"ACTA NON VERBA (ACTION NOT Words): The Vicente Abad Perez Story" will be launched today, 5:30 p.m., at the FPA Pavilion, Pandan Road, North Forbes Park, Makati.

Written by Nelson Navarro, the book charts the life of Perez, from his days as a scholar at the US Merchant Marine Academy in King's Point, New York (whose motto is the book's title), to his work in the Philippine Navy, and his success as a businessman in the shipping services sector.

Although afflicted with Parkinson's disease in his 60s, he took his lumps like an officer and a gentleman. He died on Sept. 7 before reaching his 80th birthday.

Book club tackles Gabriel Garcia Marquez novel

MEMORIES OF MY MELANCHOLY WHORES

LIAN HEARN
Brilliance of the Moon

POWERBOOKS KICKS OFF ITS POWER Book Club discussions for the new year with Lian Hearn's "Brilliance of the Moon" and Gabriel Garcia Marquez's "Memories of My Melancholy Whores."

"Brilliance" brings a satisfying conclusion to Hearn's "Tales of the Otori" epic fantasy trilogy. The book blends romance and martial arts.

In the final installment, Takeo Otori must fulfill the prophecy of a holy woman to reclaim the Otori lands. "Peace comes at the price of bloodshed. Five battles will buy you peace, four to win and one to lose."

Takeo and his beloved wife Kaede Shirakawa prepare for a war to recoup their respective realms.

Nobel laureate Garcia Marquez returns to the fiction scene after a decade with "Memories of My Melancholy Whores." The novella begins with the protagonist, an unnamed nonagenarian declaring to gift himself a night of wild life with an adolescent virgin for his birthday.

However, the sight of his 14-year-old "gift" soundly sleeping mesmerizes him. An unexpected love blossoms for the man who has listed 514 women whom "he made love without love" (he stopped counting them when he was 50). Recounting his sad and idly spent existence while watching the object of his affection sleep, he discovers for the first time "the improbable pleasure of contemplating the body of a sleeping woman without the urgencies of desire or the obstacles of modesty."

Discussions for "Brilliance" will be held Jan. 30, 6:30 p.m., at PowerBooks Greenbelt, while those for "Memories" will be on Jan. 31, 6:30 p.m., at PowerBooks Megamall.

Those who register and sign up for the club at the customer-service counter of any PowerBooks branch will get 10 percent off the featured books. Powercard Plus holders who sign up get 20 percent off. The first 16 registrants to arrive get a free cup of coffee from Java Man.

PowerBooks has branches at Greenbelt 4 (7576428/29); Megamall (6352898-99); Alabang Town Center (8505662-63); Glorietta 3 (7527075); Shangri-La (6380023/25); Robinsons Place Ermita (5233334/5243448); Mall of Asia (5560244); and Festival Supermall (8508221).

George Sison launches book; Ernie Garcia unveils tile-art works

GEORGE SISON WILL launch his new book, "Feng Shui of the Mind, I Am a Winner," Jan. 27, 6:30 p.m., at Galerie Astra of the LRI Business Plaza, 210 Nicanor Garcia St. (formerly Reposo St.), Bel-Air II, Makati City.

ERNIE Garcia

GEORGE Sison

"You have the choice and the power to change what is not working in your life," Sison writes. "What you cannot imagine, you cannot have."

"When people around you no longer make you love yourself, it is time to move on," he adds.

Sison is a motivational speaker and counselor. He was a martial law political prisoner, producer and talk-show host, astrologer and diviner, gourmet and restaurateur. He is also composer and lyricist, having written the song "What Name Shall I Give You, My Love," made famous by Pilita Corrales and recorded by the second generation of The Platters.

Meanwhile, actor-artist Ernie Garcia will unveil his tile-art works "Women on Fiberglass," a tribute to Elizabeth Taylor.

The collection will be launched also on Jan. 27 at Galerie Astra, and will run until Feb. 10.

The dual launchings are part of the third anniversary of the LRI Business Plaza.

LRI Art Space and Galerie Astra are open 10 a.m.-7 p.m., except Sundays.

Call 8903988, 7263988 or 8951772.

Seminars on US working visa in Cebu and Baguio

UNITED STATES-LICENSED IMmigration lawyer Michael Templo ESQ of Templo & Templo Immigration Consultants is holding a seminar on working in the United States Jan. 31 at the Baguio Igorot Club, John Hay, AIM Conference Center; and Feb. 3 at Waterfront Hotel, Adriatic Room, Lahug, Cebu, 1-4 p.m.

If you are in the field of IT, telecom, healthcare, finance and accounting, teaching, legal, marketing and advertising, sales, management engineering, architecture, mathematics, sciences, business, theology, arts, you may have the opportunity to legally live and work in the US with a working visa, or what is commonly known as H1B.

Templo specializes in immigration and litigation cases in New York. He received his Juris Doctor degree from Touro Law in New York and is a member of the American Immigration Lawyers Association.

Call 8935964, 0917-5380797 or 0917-6082276.

Classical concert in Cagayan de Oro

THE RODELSA HALL OF LICEO DE Cagayan University in Cagayan de Oro will mount "All About Love," a tribute concert to Wolfgang Amadeus Mozart, Jan. 26 at 8 p.m.

The concert features soprano Joscephine Gomez and pianist Rudolf Golez. Gomez will interpret German lieder as well as Andrew Lloyd Weber compositions.

The concert is for the benefit of the House of Hope Foundation. Call (088)8586593 or 8584093-95 local 150.

THE FUTURE National Artist for theater as a 15-year-old

AS BERNARDA Alba in Lorca's "The House of Bernarda Alba"

Daisy at 90

From page C1

Edades: "You have very good actors in your group, but that young girl who played the maid, she's going to be a star!'"

"I've never forgotten what Mrs. Edades told me. 'There are no small roles, only small actors.' That's a lesson I keep telling the young ones. Even in life, it's the same thing. There are no small roles in life, only small people."

Any talk of legacy, of her place in Philippine art and culture, and she is as modest.

"That's for others to say," says Avellana. "I just hope to be remembered as a good human being. And that I tried my best. Whether I triumphed in my roles or not, it's important that I did my best."

You did, Ms Avellana, you did.

E-mail the author at gcadiz@inquirer.com.ph, visit www.gibbscadiz.com

AS MEDEA

The women of Amado Lacuesta Jr.

By Ian Rosales Casocot
Contributor

TO TAKE INTO CONSIDERATION the films written by the late Amado Lacuesta Jr. is to consider intimately the many facets of the Filipino woman.

Not that Lacuesta exclusively examined the psychology of the Filipina. He has written other films of divergent concerns as well, some political, and some even overtly macho vehicles for venerable action stars.

For Lino Brocka, he penned "Macho Dancer" together with Ricardo Lee, which remains to date the definitive look into the underground lives of gay men. For Tikoy Aguiluz and Butch Perez, he wrote "Balweg, The Rebel Priest," about the defrocked priest who took up arms against Marcos.

For Perez, he wrote "Mumbaki," a study of cultural conflict about a doctor who goes home to the Cordillera to bury his father, but finds himself torn between city and country, between modern and traditional ways of healing. He also collaborated on Fernando Poe Jr.'s "Ako ang Huhusga," about an upright police officer's struggle against a corrupt judge.

And so: Lacuesta's screenplays as a study of women? We can begin with his work for Pablo Santiago's certified Sharon Cuneta blockbuster "Kahit Konting Pagtingin."

But it is his early works with Ishmael Bernal which will exemplify the relatively short film career of this former investment banker.

At 36, his screenplay for "Working Girls" gave him instant critical recognition. When it was released in 1984, "Working Girls" descended on Filipino audiences like a thunderclap, capturing then the zeitgeist of Filipino women who "worked hard, played hard, and made and broke rules."

AMADO Lacuesta Jr.

It featured an all-star cast (Gina Pareño, Chanda Romero, Hilda Koronel, Maria Isabel Lopez, Carmi Martin and Rio Locsin) and charted the lives of women toiling in the corporate bowels of Makati—a roving jewelry dealer, an executive, a licentious secretary, a socialite, a secretary impregnated by her boss and a receptionist who becomes a call girl—and came up with a satire that proved revolutionary.

No other film then tackled the male-centric culture of local business and was thus championed as a shrewd skewering. It preceded the like-themed "Working Girl" directed by Mike Nichols and inspired José Javier Reyes' "Makati Avenue."

He wrote Bernal's episode for "Shake, Rattle, and Roll" (the first and best of the now-tired series). In "Pridyider," the story of a refrigerator possessed by evil could have landed the film in the murk of camp, but Lacuesta gave it a true sense of dread. The undercurrent of female sexuality gives the film its edge: Janice de Belen becomes the object of the refrigerator's carnal intentions, a play on the power of a woman's burgeoning sexuality.

In Bernal's "Hinugot sa Langit," he cast aside the satiric and metaphoric to seriously engage this female world. Maricel Soriano plays a woman who discovers she's pregnant. She faces moral alternatives in both Amy Austria, a sassy woman who urges her to abort it, and Charito Solis, the overly religious landlady who represents the other option. Minus melodrama and histrionics, Lacuesta's script managed to render them beyond dramatic caricatures, and gave each a complex humanity.

In Eddie Garcia's "Kung Kasalanan Man," written with Raquel Villavicencio, the darker side of female psychology is savagely explored, with Dina Bonnevie in a dual role of a decent woman and her Doppelganger, a "friend" who has surgery to look like her and usurp everything she owns and loves.

Lacuesta's last screenplay was for Aguiluz's "Segurista," written with Pete Lacaba, and is remembered as a masterpiece inexplicably rated X by the MTRCB. Upending the desperation then only hinted at in "Working Girls," he gave a stark view of things in his story of a top insurance agent (Michelle Aldana) who moonlights as a GRO.

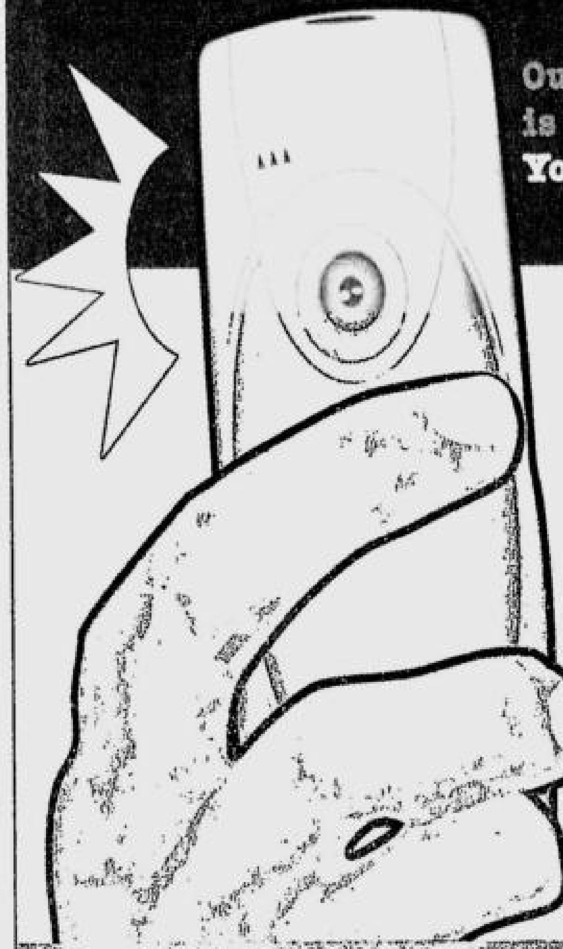
The men she meets and services at night become her insurance clients by day, all too ready to buy what she sells. It twisted the notions of the very '90s concepts of synergy and networking, and gave us a damning indictment of life in Fidel Ramos' short-lived tiger economy and the sad circumstances distorting it.

Lacuesta—whose accomplishments included the Palanca Award for his stories, and whose passions included photography and history—died from heart attack in Baguio in 1997. He was 49.

The screenwriter sometimes is the forgotten artist in the collaborative effort of film art, overshadowed by actors and, in terms of auteurship, by directors. It is a tragic mistake.

In a career that produced films of consistent excellence and which have given many of our actresses (Soriano, Bonnevie, Aldana, and many others) the roles of their lives, Lacuesta has the distinction for being a man with worthwhile things to say about women. Lacuesta proved by and large that he was without equal.

A retrospective of Lacuesta's films will be shown in UP Film Institute's Cine Adarna, UP Diliman, Quezon City, Jan. 23-24. Go to madslacuesta.com for more details.



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INQUIRER

Jullie Yap-Daza delivers lecture on journalism

NOTED JOURNALIST JULLIE YAP-Daza will deliver the fourth annual UST Varsitarian-Jose Villa Panganiban (JVP) Professorial Chair for Journalism lecture today (Jan. 22), 1-4 p.m., at the Thomas Aquinas Research Complex auditorium, University of Santo Tomas, España, Manila.

The lecture is hosted by the Varsitarian, the 79-year-old official UST student publication, and the UST Journalism Society.

In her lecture, "Challenges of a Multimedia Journalist," Yap-Daza will discuss the challenges of a multimedia journalist as she has experienced success in both print and broadcast journalism.

An editor of the Varsitarian during her college days, Yap-Daza graduated summa cum laude from the old UST Faculty of Philosophy and Letters (now Faculty of Arts and Letters), with a degree in journalism in 1961. She became a newspaper editor and wrote the witty column, Medium Rare. She later invaded television and became host of such popular talk shows as "Tell the City, Tell the People" and "Jullie!"

She was the editor in chief of People (under Times Journal), Oh!, Lifestyle Asia and Manila Standard. She is now a columnist of the Manila Bulletin and Panorama.

The JVP is an annual lecture on currents and issues on journalism and the media arts. Established in 1999 through an endowment by the Varsitarian, the lecture is named after Jose Villa Panganiban, the founder of the publication.

Panganiban, born on June 12, 1903, was director of the Institute of National Language (now the Komisyon ng Wika) and is acknowledged as one of the foremost promoters and developers of the national language. An award-winning journalist, writer, translator, radio personality and linguist, he is best known for his classic work on lexicography, the "Diksyunaryo-Tesauro Ingles-Pilipino."

The lecture is open to the public on a first-come, first-served basis.

Call 4061611 local 8235 or 0917-2495004. E-mail varsitar@yahoo.com.

Pinoy author of the month

NATIONAL ARTIST AND RAMON Magsaysay (RM) laureate Bienvenido Lumbera is widely acknowledged as one of the pillars of contemporary Philippine literature, cultural studies and film.

In his early days, Lumbera was an admirer of Western literature. But he shifted to Philippine studies when he was challenged to complete his doctoral dissertation on Philippine vernacular literature. He started writing Tagalog poetry, essays, plays and journals, also gaining popularity for his literary criticisms. He is now considered as the founder of Philippine studies.

In electing him for the 1993 RM Award, the RM Foundation board of trustees recognized his "asserting the central place of the vernacular tradition in framing a national identity for modern Filipinos."

Some of his writings include textbooks such as "Filipinos Writing: Philippine Literature from the Regions" and "Philippine Literature and Anthology."

The books are available at PowerBooks, which has named Lumbera the Pinoy Author of the Month for January.

NATIONAL Artist Bienvenido Lumbera

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The incredible convenience, speed and security of the "contactless" payment solution are now for Filipino consumers to enjoy as Banco de Oro, in collaboration with MasterCard Worldwide, has introduced the first publicly available contactless card program in the Philippines - the BDO International ATM MasterCard® *PayPass*™ card.

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Specially-designed to replace cash payments, *PayPass* is well suited for transactions where speed is important - in supermarkets, convenience stores, drive-through outlets, take-away outlets, tollgates, movie theaters, restaurants and mass transport. It also provides more consumer control and security since the card or device does not leave the hands of consumers to be inserted into the terminal by the merchant's personnel.

Filipino *PayPass* card holders can start taking advantage of these benefits offered by the BDO International ATM MasterCard *PayPass* card as a number of establishments have already set up *PayPass*-enabled acceptance terminals - with more expected to follow suit. Among the first local merchants to accept *PayPass* payments are Figaro and Crepes and Cream at The Podium, AstroVision and Bench at SM Megamall, and Wendy's, SM Cinema / IMAX and French Baker at SM Mall of Asia.

"We are pleased to collaborate with Banco de Oro to bring the contactless payment solution to the Philippines via the BDO International ATM MasterCard *PayPass* card and let Filipino consumers experience the convenience, speed and security it offers," said Poch Villa-Real , MasterCard International Philippines Inc. Country manager. "Global interoperability is vital to the success of any payment program and cardholders can now enjoy the ease and convenience of using their *PayPass* cards anywhere in the world where *PayPass* is accepted", he added.

For years, MasterCard has been the industry innovator in contactless payments. From consumer research and development efforts to conducting market trials and standardizing communications protocols for contactless payments, MasterCard has paved the way for the increasing demand and successful roll-out of *PayPass* globally.

MasterCard *PayPass* has already been introduced in several countries including: the United States, Canada, United Kingdom, Japan, Korea, Thailand, Turkey, Lebanon, Malaysia, Australia, Taiwan, South Africa and France. As of 3Q2006, there are over 11 million MasterCard *PayPass* cards and devices issued globally and approximately 36,000 merchant locations deployed around the world and the momentum is continuing.

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ENTERTAINMENT

Editor **Emmie G. Velarde**

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SHARON LEAL

Pinay in 'Dreamgirls'

SHARON LEAL, THE SINGER WHO REplaces Jennifer Hudson's character in the hit movie "Dreamgirls," is a Filipino-American, according to Wikipedia, the online encyclopedia.

Wikipedia says of Sharon's father, Jesse: "[He] was a Master Sergeant in the United States Air Force and was a police officer at Clark Air Base in the Philippines. He now currently teaches at an elementary school. Leal's mother Angelita is remarried to Elmer Manankil, the father of Leal's younger sister named Kristina Manankil."

Sharon appears midway in "Dreamgirls." She is also featured on the film's soundtrack CD, which has been topping the album sales charts in the United States.

Another good reason to see the award-winning movie.

Richest women in the biz

NEW YORK—OPRAH WINFREY IS the richest woman in entertainment, and few are surprised.

The talk-show titan, who has amassed $1.5 billion over the course of her impressive career, has bested "Harry Potter" author J.K. Rowling and lifestyle guru Martha Stewart to take the No. 1 spot on Forbes.com's list of "The 20 Richest Women in Entertainment."

Rowling, who is finishing the seventh and final installment in her boy wizard series, ranks second with $1 billion. Stewart is third with $638 million.

Madonna ranks fourth with $325 million, followed by Celine Dion, $250 million; Mariah Carey $225 million; Janet Jackson $150 million; Julia Roberts, $140 million; and Jennifer Aniston and Jennifer Lopez both $110 million.

Mary-Kate and Ashley Olsen, the twin actresses who started out on the '80s comedy "Full House" and created a multimedia empire, Dualstar Entertainment Group, are No. 11 with an estimated "combined net worth at around $100 million," Forbes said.

They are followed by Britney Spears, Judge Judy Sheindlin of TV's "Judge Judy," Sandra Bullock, Cameron Diaz, Gisele Bundchen, Ellen DeGeneres, Nicole Kidman, Christina Aguilera and Renee Zellweger.

Brazilian supermodel Gisele Bundchen is the highest-rated fashion figure, with a personal wealth of $70 million.

Forbes said these rich ladies needed a minimum net worth of $45 million amassed over the course of their careers to make the list.

The list excludes non-working celebrities who live off royalties, such as Barbra Streisand, and those whom Forbes.com describes as "old Hollywood" types, such as Elizabeth Taylor, confining the list to those active in entertainment. *AP, AFP*

OPRAH WINFREY

JENNIFER LOPEZ

JULIA ROBERTS

JENNIFER ANISTON

Academics pick 5 best 2006 films

By Bayani San Diego Jr.

GAWAD TANGLAW OR GAWAD TAGApuring mga Akademiks ng Aninong Gumagalaw announces the winners of its fifth annual citations.

Dr. Jaime Ong, president emeritus, says Gawad Tanglaw is "a group of critics, scholars, historians and humanities professors."

To mark its fifth year, the group cites five films as the year's best—Jeffrey Jeturian's "Kubrador," Brillante Mendoza's "Kaleldo," Jose Javier Reyes' "Kasal, Kasali, Kasalo," Pablo Biglang-Awa and Veronica Velasco's "Inang Yaya" and Sherad Anthony Sanchez's "Huling Balyan ng Buhi." These films are al-

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No Best Picture favorite in Oscars

LOS ANGELES—THE GOLDEN Globes, trade unions, film critics and just about everyone else in Hollywood have weighed in on 2006's best film achievements, helping to solidify the Academy Awards picture—and muddy it up a bit, too.

With Oscar nominations due out tomorrow, a few clear front-runners and some intriguing wild cards have emerged, along with an unusually open race for the top prize.

Still to come are honors by the Directors Guild of America and Screen Actors Guild, whose nominations came out earlier this month. Those awards should help sort out much of the Oscar outlook, but unlike most years, when a solid favorite often emerges, the Best Picture category could remain up for grabs right up to awards night Feb. 25.

Sure things

Helen Mirren and Forest Whitaker seemingly sewed up the Best Actress and Actor categories from the minute their films debuted last fall.

Mirren looks unbeatable for her turn as prim Elizabeth II in "The Queen." She brings marvelous haughtiness and humanity to the maligned monarch.

If there's a Best Actress dark horse, it's Penelope Cruz, who delivers a career performance full of heart and humor in "Volver," playing a woman coping with possibly supernatural-crises in her domestic life.

The puzzle

The quiet, even-keeled Whitaker, known more for hushed menace or gentle humor, explodes on screen as Ugandan dictator Idi Amin in "The Last King of Scotland."

The only actor with an outside chance at usurping Whitaker's Oscar crown is Peter O'Toole, as a frail but still lecherous old actor in "Venus."

Most years, a front-runner or two has emerged by now, but no clear favorite has stepped forward from this season's far-flung group of Best Picture wannabes.

Almost certain to grab nominations are the musical "Dreamgirls," the crime saga "The Departed" and the monarchy chronicle "The Queen." The international drama "Babel" also looks like a safe bet, and the road tale "Little Miss Sunshine" has a strong shot to become a rare comedy that sneaks into the Best Picture mix.

Clint Eastwood's World War II companion films, "Letters From Iwo Jima" and "Flags of Our Fathers," have outside chances, though neither has caught much fire with earlier awards or audiences. The suburban comic drama "Little Children" also has a shot.

As a James Brown-like soul wailer in "Dreamgirls," Eddie Murphy looks like a solid Supporting Actor front-runner.

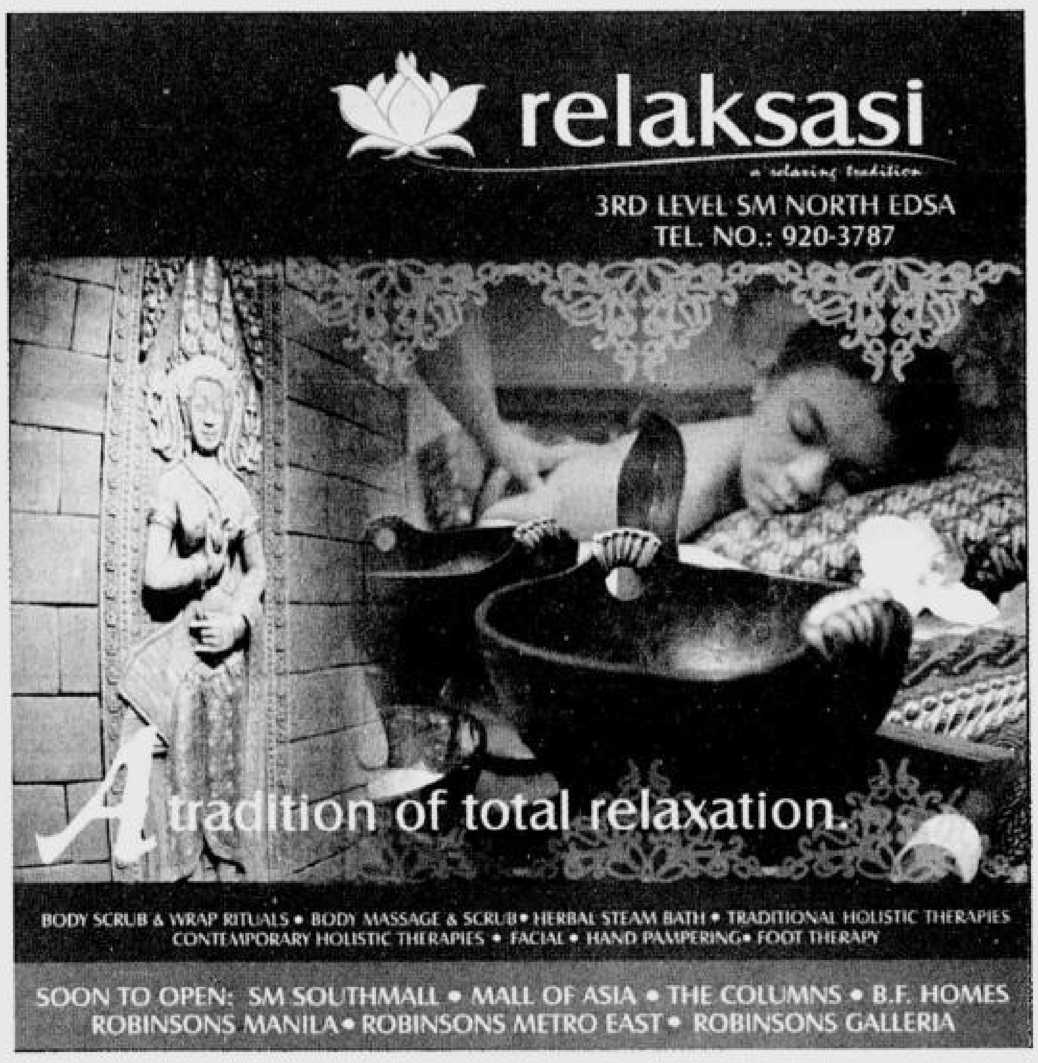
Director Martin Scorsese could go down in the books as one of the all-time biggest Oscar failures. With five nominations and no wins, Scorsese is tied with four other directors for "losingest" filmmaker. A sixth loss would make him the record-holder.

Looking good

His prospects look good this time with "The Departed," though the same was true two years ago, when he lost to Clint Eastwood, whose "Million Dollar Baby" won, beating "The Aviator" for Best Picture.

Eastwood scored two directing nominations for the Golden Globes with "Flags of Our Fathers" and "Letters From Iwo Jima," though his Oscar star faded after he was shut out from a Directors' Guild nomination.

Scorsese recently won at the Golden Globes. *AP*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DID YOU KNOW...

Real mom

ACTRESS AND DIrector Laurice Guillen returns to the theater scene as Amanda Wingfield in Tanghalang Ateneo's stage adaptation of Tennessee William's "The Glass Menagerie."

And her real-life daughters, Ana and Ina Feleo, alternately play Amanda's withdrawn child, Laura.

"Amanda is like mommy," Ina says. "She's exuberant, and likes to tell stories."

The play runs until Feb. 10 at the Rizal Mini-Theater, Ateneo de Manila University—Thursdays and Fridays at 7 p.m. and Saturdays at 2 p.m. and 7 p.m.

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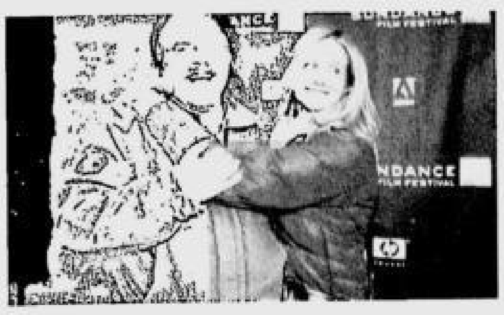

VETERAN actors and new faces gather at the ongoing Sundance Festival in Utah, from top left, Philip Seymour Hoffman and Laura Linney, Diego Luna and Ellen Page.

REUTERS, AFP

From 'industry' to 'indiestry'

VIEWFINDER

Nestor U. Torre

THE MOVIE TIMES HAVE CHANGED in many major ways in the past 10 years:

Local film production plummeted from 200 features a year down to 50. Digital filmmaking has both democratized and saved the Filipino film industry.

Action superstars have all but stopped making movies, and it's new leads who are coming up with hit movies. Mall cineplexes have become the dominant movie circuit. Ticket prices have zoomed up from P30 to P100 and beyond.

Television has become stiff competition, offering "free" entertainment and most of the stars who used to be seen only on the big screen.

Faced with these challenges, most movie producers have folded up their tents, leaving hundreds of movie workers jobless. Some self-appointed doom-and-gloomers have even held wakes to mourn the "death" of Filipino films.

And yet, in the midst of all the ululation and caterwauling, movies continue to be made, so whose death are we talking about? The death of tired, old formats, maybe. The extinction of the fat-cat star system, perhaps. The demise of quickies and sleazies, definitely.

Encouraged by festivals and competitions like Cinemalaya, independent filmmakers have been coming up with one digital feature after another, boosting the industry's annual production figures last year to over 100.

In the light of this digital upsurge, the industry's downward spiral is now officially over.

And yet, the movie industry's woes haven't floated away on the proverbial pink cloud of the Happy Ending. Optimistic Furtherance is more like it, but new problems have presented themselves, and must be solved before the coast can truly be clear.

Bottom line

Bottom line: The salvation of local movies lies in economical digital filmmaking, with its fresh talents and formats. Unfortunately, all those plus factors haven't translated into big enough audiences to support the new movement.

In addition, digital features have been criticized for looking technically inferior, speaking in too personal and recondite a language, and disinteresting the mainstream audience.

Some indie filmmakers tried to solve the situation by "going mainstream" in some ways, but the effect was half-baked and forced. The new "indie industry" has to find its niche by being itself, and finding solutions to its unique problems.

The technical deficiencies need to be compensated for without adding too much to digital movies' necessarily modest budgets. New leads have to be carefully chosen and built up, not just for talent but also for charisma, so mainstream viewers can warm up to them.

More cinemas capable of screening digital features should be set up in key cities all over the country, so the indie movement can truly "go national."

Above all, indie movies should offer characters and situations that people can readily identify with and warm up to.

This was proven by the most-viewed digital movie to date, "Ang Pagdadalaga ni Maximo Oliveros," when it played to good houses during its mainstream run. It was about a dysfunctional family, but it was about a *family*, and most viewers could relate to that.

Let's hope these and other changes can be put in place soonest, so the movie "industry" can truly become the "indiestry" as the film times apparently deem it most fortuitously to become.

Academics pick 5 best 2006 films

From page D1

so cited for Best Direction.

Best Actress is Gina Pareño of "Kubrador," which also receives Best Story, Screenplay (Ralston G. Jover) and Students' Choice honors.

"I am very happy for 'Kubrador,' especially since these awards are [from] teachers," Pareño says.

Rustom Padilla is Best Actor ("Zsazsa Zaturnnah Ze Moveeh"). Chokoleit ("Zaturnnah") and Arnell Ignacio ("Twilight Dancers") share the Best Supporting Actor award.

"It's a pleasant surprise," says Padilla. "I wasn't thinking of awards when I did the movie. I just had fun."

Celia Rodriguez is Best Supporting Actress for "Ligalig," which also receives the Best Cinematography (Gilberto Vistan) and Best Editing (Jason Cahapay and Erik Oviedo) honors.

The awards ceremony is set March 1, 5 p.m. at the University of Perpetual Help in Las Piñas City.

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Rockwell Center, Makati City ☎ Tel. No: 8981440-41 DOLBY DIGITAL SURROUND-EX

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BLOOD DIAMOND **R13** 1:25,4:25,7:25,10:25	**ERAGON** **G** 1:30,3:50,6:10,8:30	**DÉJÀ VU** **PG13** 12:30,3:00,5:30,8:00,10:30

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① ERAGON
MTRCB GP
1.00, 3 15, 5.30, 7:45, 10:00

② DÉJÀ VU
MTRCB PG-13
2 00, 4 40, 7 20, 10 00

③ BLOOD DIAMOND
MTRCB R-13
1 00, 4.00, 7:00, 10.00

④ SAW 3
MTRCB R-18
2 30, 4 50, 7 10, 9 30

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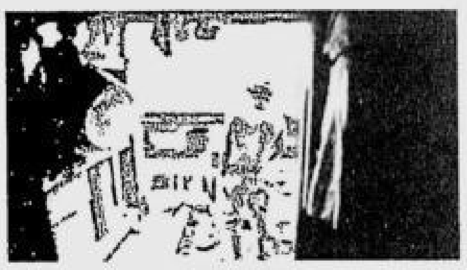

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	1	2	3	4	5	6	7
G1 GLORIETTA 1	SAW 3	DÉJÀ VU	ROB-B-HOOD	AGENT X44			
G4 GLORIETTA 4	BLOOD DIAMOND	KASAL, KASALI, KASALO	THX DÉJÀ VU GUARANTEED SEATS	INNOCENT VOICES	ARTHUR & THE INVISIBLES	ERAGON	SAW 3
GB1 GREENBELT 1	SAW 3	DÉJÀ VU					
GB3 GREENBELT 3	THX ERAGON GUARANTEED SEATS	THX DÉJÀ VU GUARANTEED SEATS	INNOCENT VOICES GUARANTEED SEATS	SAW 3 GUARANTEED SEATS	BLOOD DIAMOND GUARANTEED SEATS		
ATC ALABANG TOWN CENTER	THX DÉJÀ VU GUARANTEED SEATS	ERAGON	SAW 3	AGENT X44	ARTHUR & THE INVISIBLES		
ACC AYALA CENTER CEBU	DÉJÀ VU	SAW 3	A GOOD YEAR	AGENT X44			
M2 MARKET! MARKET!	AGENT X44	DÉJÀ VU	SAW 3	ARTHUR & THE INVISIBLES	KASAL KASALI KASALO		

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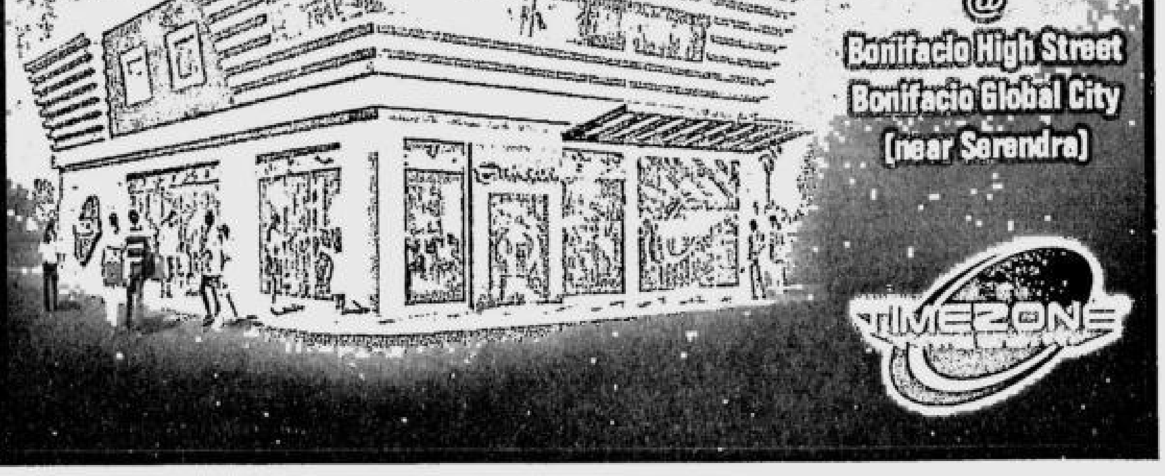

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ROUNDUP

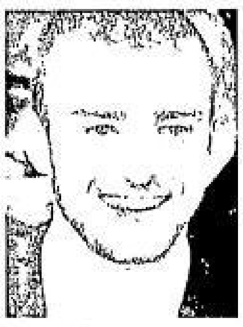
"My Grammy Moment"

LOS ANGELES—HOT ON THE HEELS OF Fox's "American Idol," five finalists have been named to compete for the chance to perform with singer Justin Timberlake at the Grammy Awards.

Fans voting online at Yahoo! Music narrowed the field from 12 finalists in the "My Grammy Moment" contest for unsigned artists, namely: Africa Miranda, 30, of Montgomery, Alabama; Jillian Gaudious, 25, of Long Branch, New Jersey; Brenda Radney, 22, of Staten Island, New York; Robyn Troup, 18, of Houston, Texas; and Jessica James, 18, of Warner Robins, Georgia.

Online and text message votes during the 49th annual Grammy Awards, which will be telecast Feb. 11, by CBS Corp.'s CBS network from the Staples Center, will determine the contest's winner.

The winner will be announced live on the show. *AP*



JUSTIN TIMBERLAKE

Peter Pan live

Diners at Spiral, Sofitel Philippine Plaza, can meet the cast of "Peter Pan," the musical, every Saturday and Sunday between 11 a.m. and 12 noon, until Feb. 4.

They can have snapshots with Peter Pan and friends, and get their autographs.

All "Peter Pan" ticket holders are entitled to a 15 percent discount at Spiral and the Sunset Barbecue upon presentation of their ticket at the reception.

Call 551-5555.

FAITH CUNETA

NCCA spokesperson

Singer Faith Cuneta is this year's spokesperson of the National Arts Month (February) celebration titled "Philippine Arts Festival" spearheaded by the National Commission for Culture and the Arts.

Cuneta was chosen for being a "role model for the youth." She won the Best Female Vocalist gold medal at the World Championships of the Performing Arts last year in Hollywood, California.

Celebrity billiards

"Pakners," a nine-ball celebrity billiard tournament, will be held on Jan. 24 at the Teatrino in Promenade, Greenhills, San Juan, Metro Manila at 6 p.m.

Representatives from entertainment, business and politics have been invited to join the competition. Winners will challenge Efren "Bata" Reyes.

Among the guest players are Ogie Alcasid, Dingdong Dantes, Christopher de Leon, Eddie Garcia, Janno Gibbs, Cesar Montano, Vilma Santos, Maricel Soriano and Eula Valdez.

New series

Starting Feb. 2, Discovery Channel's "Everything You Need To Know" premieres new episodes every Friday at 7 p.m.

The new series delves into topics that range from ghosts to weather phenomena to how our brains work.

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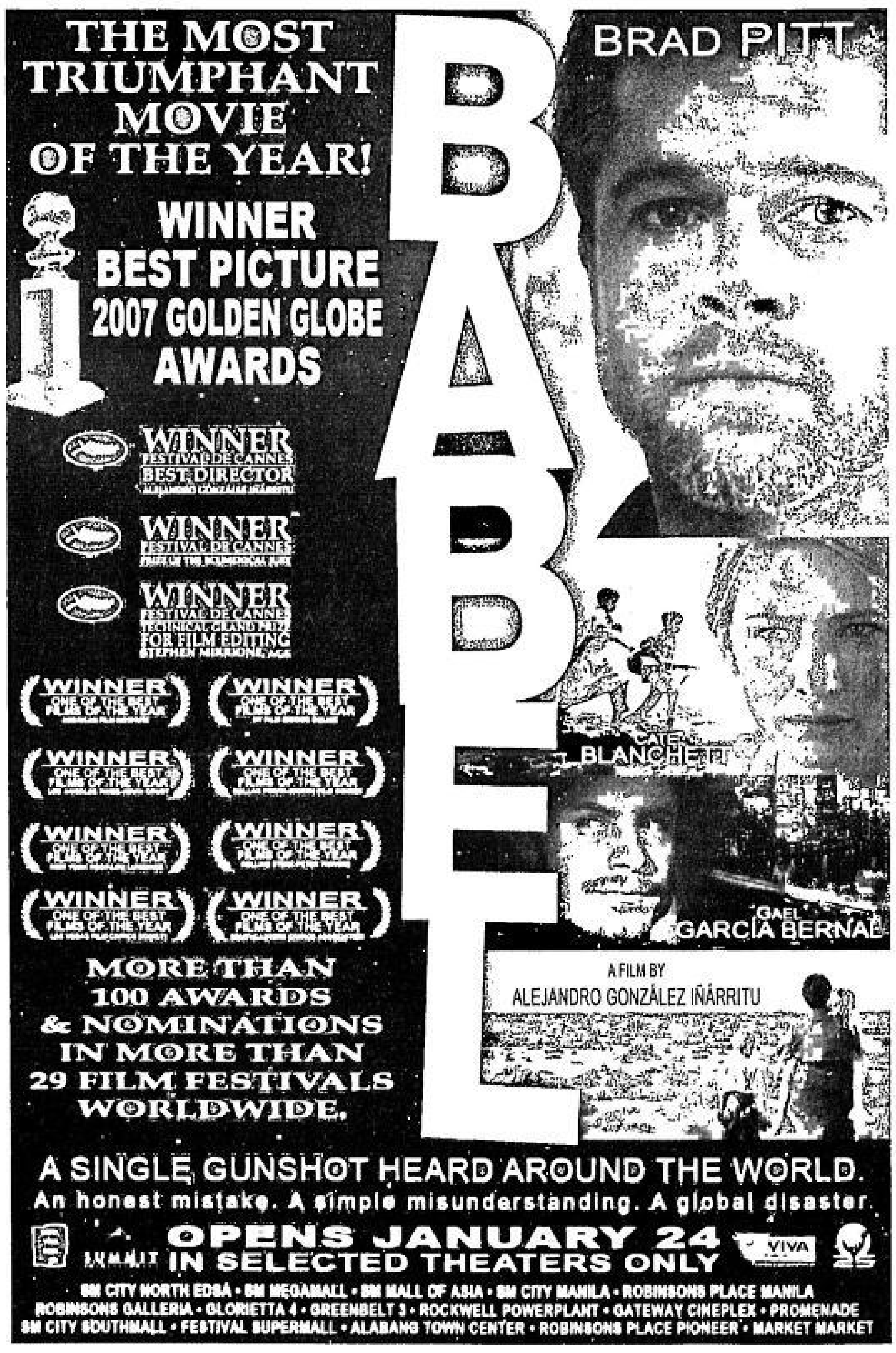

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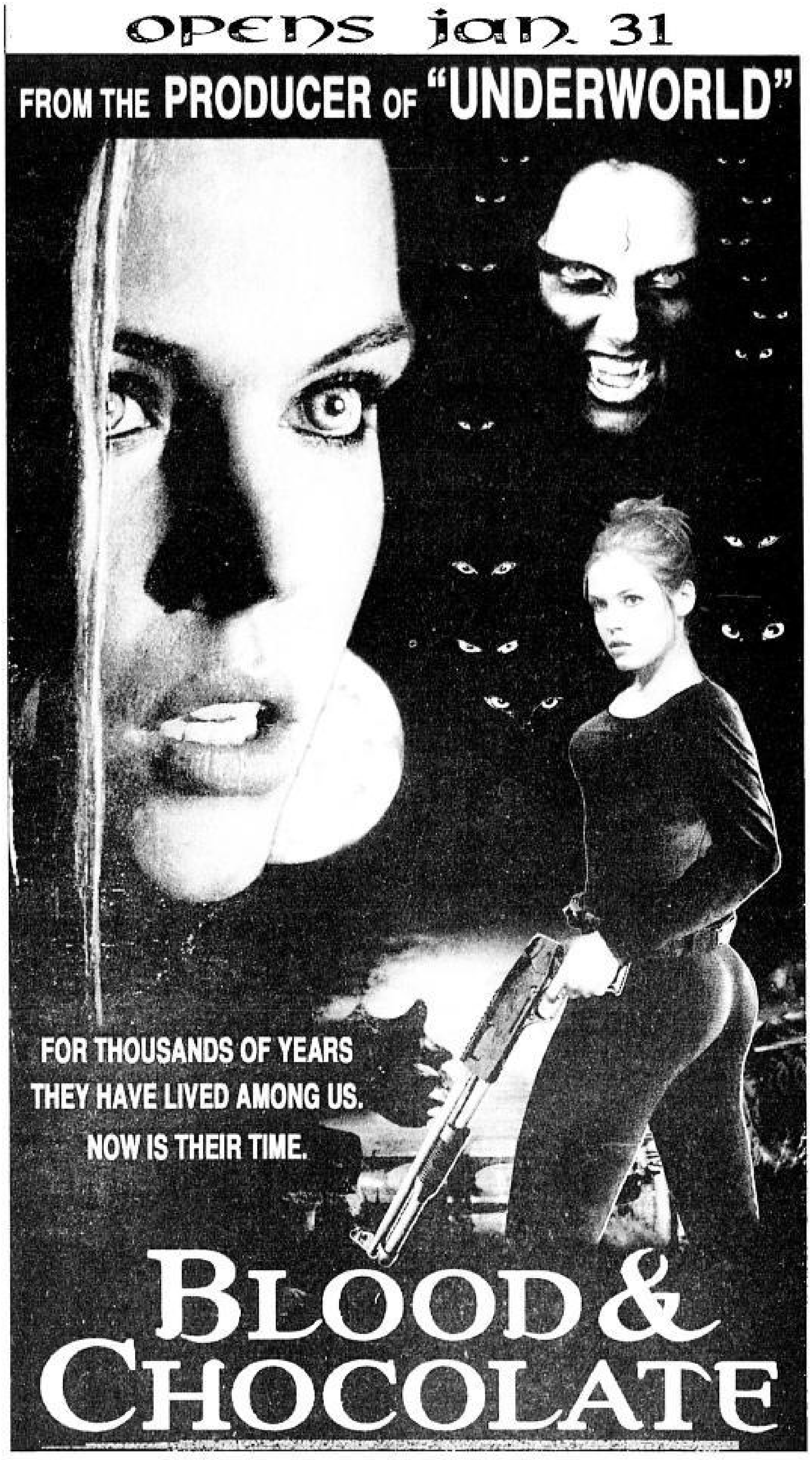

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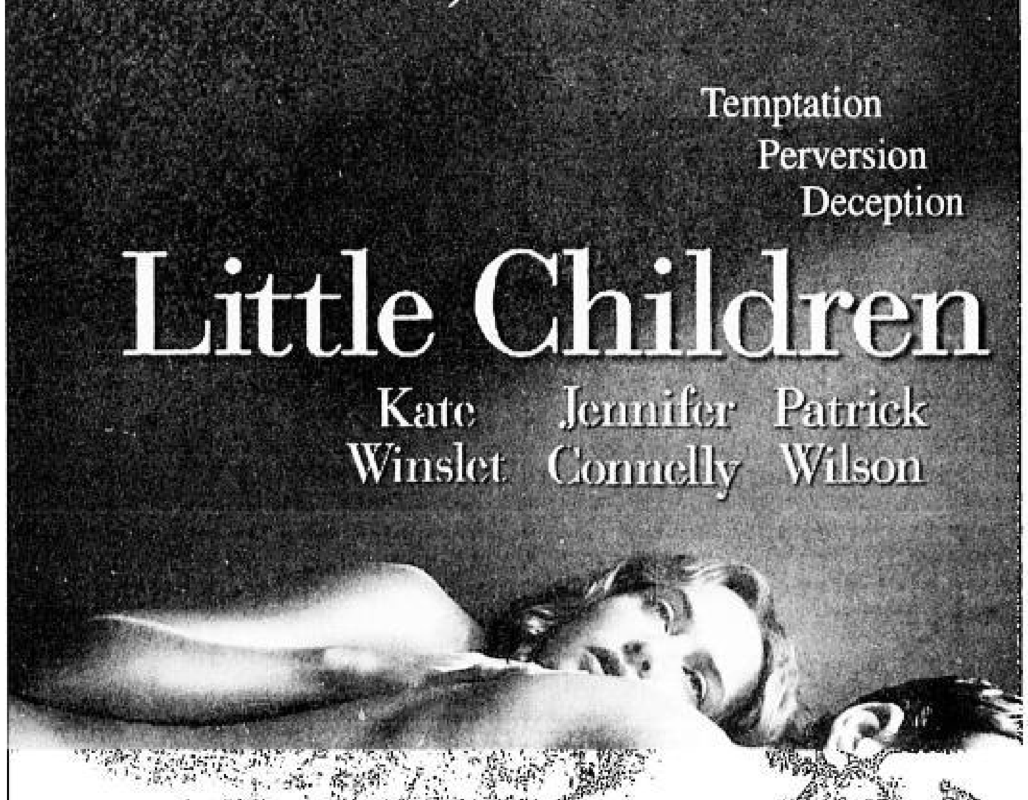

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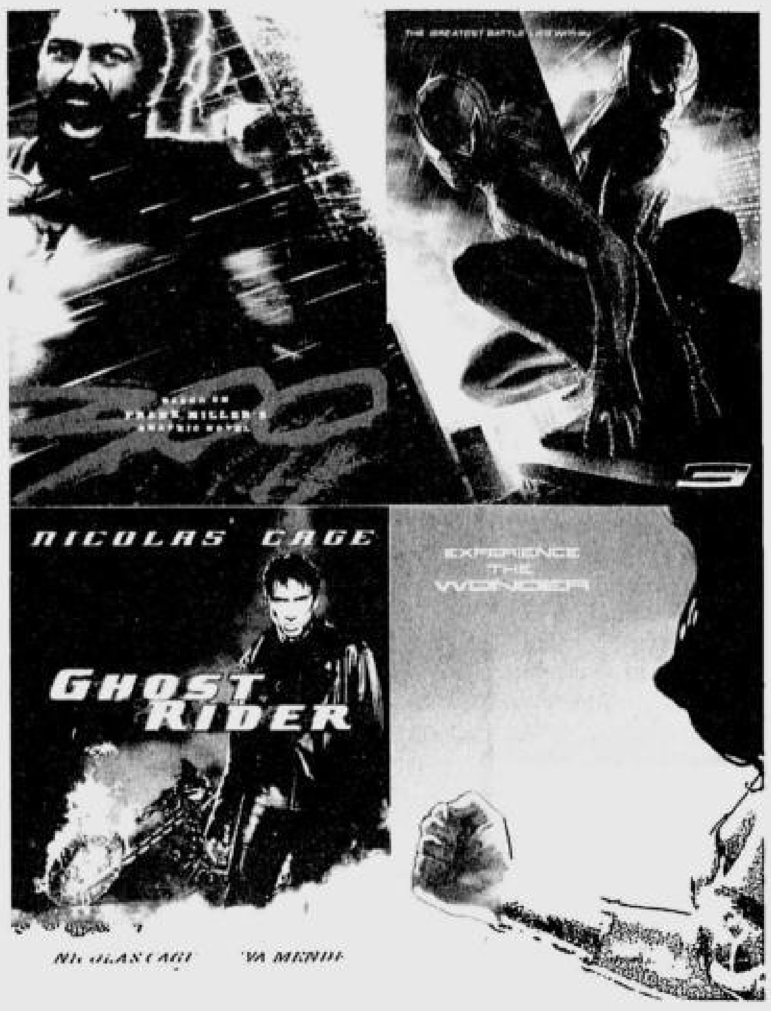
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5 of the most eagerly awaited movies based on comic books

HERE ARE THE FIVE MOST eagerly awaited comic-to-film adaptations:

"Spiderman 3"

Director Sam Raimi was not initially a big fan of Venom's. Now, Spidey fans will finally get to see the villain on the big screen. Venom will be played by actor Topher Grace.

The sequel also brings the characters Gwen Stacy (Bryce Dallas Howard), Sandman (Thomas Haden Church) and Harry Osborn (James Franco) as secondary villains.

"The Dark Knight"

"Batman Begins" (2005) didn't rake in "X-Men" money. But the inclusion of the villain Joker in the next sequel film is expected to bring in more viewers.

Heath Ledger plays The Clown Prince.

Directed by Christopher Nolan, it starts filming soon, for a 2008 release.

"300"

"Dawn of the Dead's" Zack Snyder directed this adaptation of Frank Miller's graphic novel. Shot on a Montreal soundstage, "300" recreates ancient Sparta and the last stand made by 300 of its warriors against Persia.

The cast includes Gerard Butler, Dominic West, David Wenham and Lena Headey.

For release in March 2007.

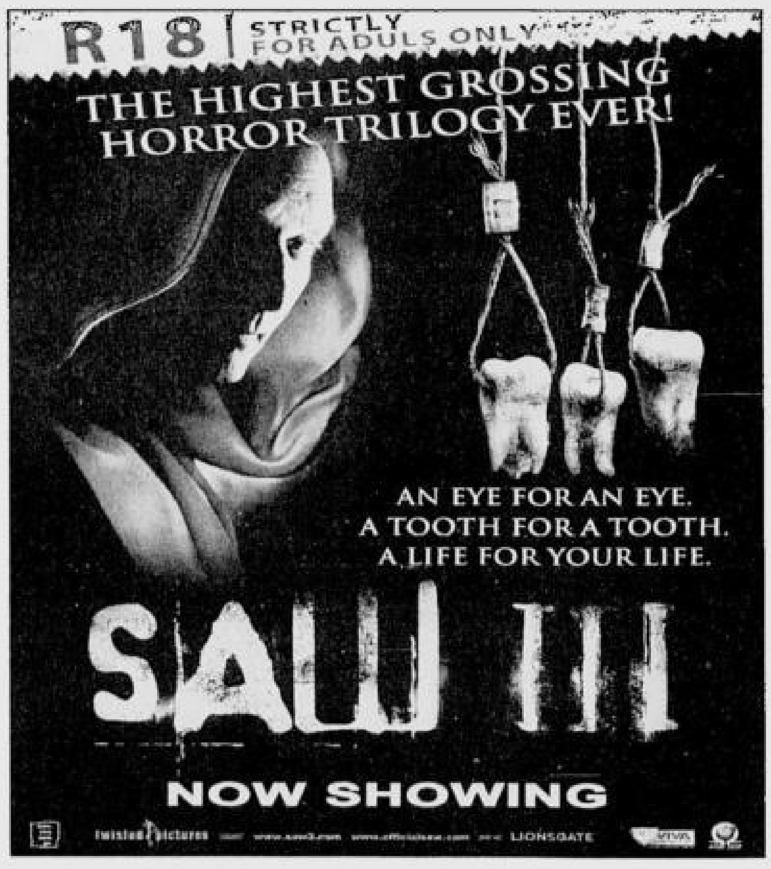
"Ghost Rider"

Comic book aficionado Nicolas Cage plays biker Johnny Blaze whose flaming skull alter ego takes on the demonic Peter Fonda and Wes Bentley in the movie directed by "Daredevil" filmmaker Mark Steven Johnson. Eva Mendes co-stars.

The Sony movie opens next month.

"Wonder Woman"

Joss Whedon writes and directs the Amazonian goddess' big-screen adventure for "The Matrix" producer Joel Silver. No actress has been cast, despite rumors pointing to such contenders as Kate Beckinsale, Mischa Barton and Charisma Carpenter).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Feb 13 & 14, 2007	Ogie Alcasid	8:00 PM

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JAN. 24, 2007	"PAKNERS" 9 Ball Celebrity Challenge	6:00 PM

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Relax, champ tells seekers of stardom

By Bayani San Diego Jr.

AT THE INQUIRER'S RECENT ANNIVERSARY party, world champ Jed Madela sang a medley of show-stoppers by Martin Nievera, Gary Valenciano, Regine Velasquez, Lani Misalucha and Sharon Cuneta.

"It's my tribute to the icons," he explained.

Madela, who topped the 2005 World Championship of Performing Arts (WCOPA or the Talent Olympics) in Hollywood, admitted that he still gets starstruck whenever he works with these "icons."

At age six, he was a big "Sharonian," he said. "I wrote to her, and my aunts mailed back a letter and photo that, they said, came from Sharon Cuneta, so I wouldn't get hurt. I was already in high school when I found out!"

When he guested on the Megastar's show recently, he was caught off-guard when she asked *him* for an autograph.

"She asked me to sign a copy of my CD, 'Songs Revisited,' and said she had bought the CD. I didn't know what to write."

Be flexible

He hasn't gotten used to hobnobbing with celebs, though he works with the likes of Martin Nievera and Gary Valenciano on the weekly ABS-CBN variety show, "ASAP '07."

And he shares CD credits with some of his idols on the Star Records tribute album for the Hotdog band, "Hotsilog."

"My track on the album, 'Ikaw Pa Rin,' is very simple but beautiful and full of emotion. Quite a change, because I am better known for [belting]."

He has since made "variety" his goal as performer. "I don't want to bore people." Thus, flexibility is a piece of advice he wishes to impart to newcomers churned out by the numerous amateur singing contests.

"Also, they should try to be more comfortable onstage, not too self-conscious. They should just have fun," he said. "The audience senses it if you are stressed."

He emphasized the importance of constantly honing one's craft. His dad, Roy Tajanlangit, a choir master in Iloilo, is his mentor.

"Training should never stop," Jed said. "After every TV appearance, my dad evaluates my performance. Performers should always learn something new."

JED MADELA RYAN LIM

Another 'Wuthering Heights' adaptation

By Nini Valera

"WUTHERING HEIGHTS," EMILY BRONTE'S gothic tale of love and revenge, has been the subject of numerous adaptations, including the latest joint venture between GMA Films and Regal Entertainment, Inc.

Titled "The Promise," the Mike Tuviera film casts Richard Gutierrez and Angel Locsin in the roles of Heathcliff and Catherine, whose romance binds the tale's twists and turns.

In 1991, Richard Gomez and Dawn Zulueta played those characters in Carlitos Siguion-Reyna's "Hihintayin Kita Sa Langit."

A famous US film adaptation was William Wyler's "Wuthering Heights" in 1939, with Sir Laurence Olivier and Merle Oberon portraying the star-crossed lovers.

Why GMA Films opted for a "remake of a remake" for its Valentine offering is another love story. "I fell in love with 'Hihintayin' when I saw it," said GMA Films president Anette Gozon-Abrogar.

Like "Hihintayin," "Promise" was written for the screen by Raquel Villavicencio, who described her new work as "very different." For one, she said, the "Promise" lead stars are younger than Gomez and Zulueta, real-life lovers at the time of "Hihintayin."

But Abrogar noted that the screen chemistry between Gutierrez and Locsin is as hot as the sparks that flew between the older duo: "The bed scenes have yet to be shot, but the kissing scenes already show passion."

They are trying to stick to a P30-million budget, Abrogar also said, adding that GMA Films has full creative control, but that they run to Regal's Lily Monteverde when they encounter problems.

Abrogar also sought the blessings of Armida Siguion-Reyna, "Hihintayin" producer. "She was all for it," Abrogar said.

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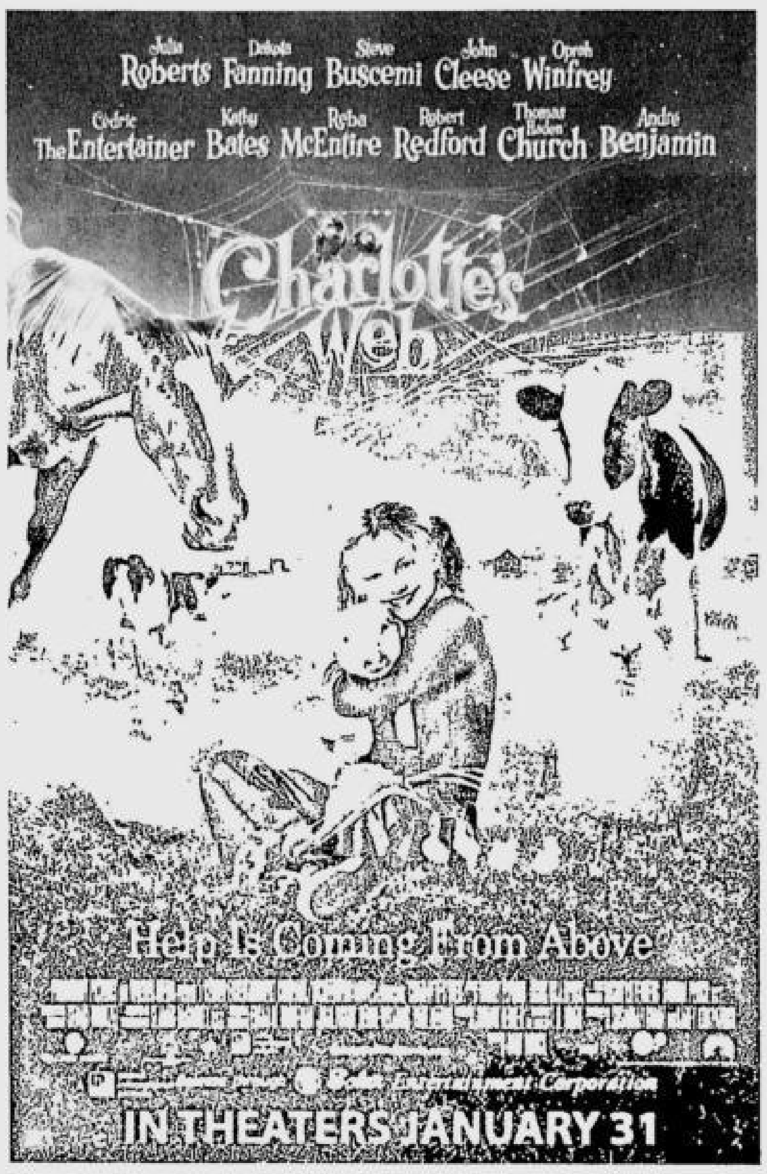
3	DÉJÀ VU	2:45, 5:35, 8:25, 11:05	PG-13
4	SAW 3	1:20, 3:45, 6:10, 8:35, 11:00	R-18



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10 ROB-B-HOOD 12:00 2:30 5:00 7:30 10:00

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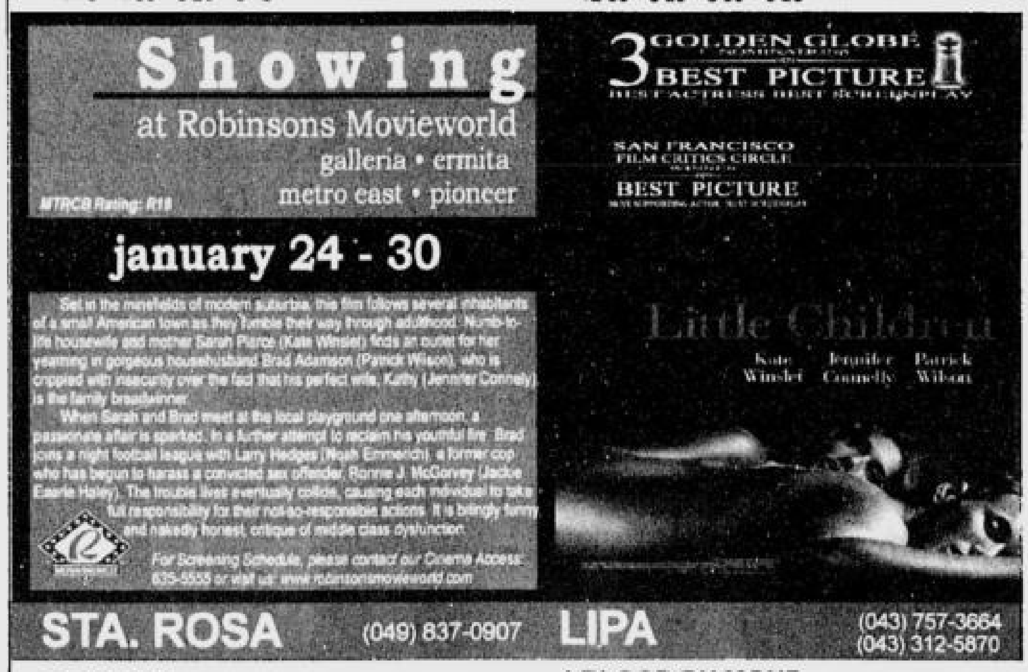

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Set in the minefields of modern suburbia, the film follows several inhabitants of a small American town as they fumble their way through adulthood. Numb-to-life housewife and mother Sarah Pierce (Kate Winslet) finds an outlet for her yearning in gorgeous househusband Brad Adamson (Patrick Wilson), who is crippled with insecurity over the fact that his perfect wife, Kathy (Jennifer Connely) is the family breadwinner.

When Sarah and Brad meet at the local playground one afternoon, a passionate affair is sparked. In a further attempt to reclaim his youthful fire, Brad joins a night football league with Larry Hedges (Noah Emmerich), a former cop who has begun to harass a convicted sex offender, Ronnie J. McGorvey (Jackie Earle Haley). The trouble lives eventually collide, causing each individual to take full responsibility for their not-so-responsible actions. It is bitingly funny and nakedly honest, critique of middle class dysfunction.

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Drew likes to run naked through the fields—but only in Ireland

NEW YORK—FORMER HOLLYWOOD WILD child Drew Barrymore likes nothing more than ripping off her clothes and running naked through the fields—although apparently only in Ireland, according to a recent interview.

"I'll drive in Ireland and park my car and run out into the field and rip all my clothes off and just run in the wheat fields naked," the actress says in an interview with Parade magazine due out this week.

The star also recalls another naked incident, when she flashed talk show host David Letterman live on network television in 1995.

DREW BARRYMORE

"I'm so glad I was so free at one point in my life," she says.

She adds that she is aware the idea might raise a few eyebrows.

"I think it alarms people, because I'm so responsible now that when I do it, it's almost surprising rather than, 'Oh, that's just her doing her thing again.'"

Barrymore is the scion of one of Hollywood's great acting dynasties. Her latest film, the romantic comedy "Music and Lyrics," opens next month. *AFP*

Brangelina in New Orleans

LOS ANGELES—Globe-trotting Hollywood couple Angelina Jolie and Brad Pitt have moved to New Orleans and plan to send their three children to school there, Us Weekly magazine reported on Tuesday.

"We love it there," Jolie was quoted as saying in confirming the move at the Golden Globe awards ceremony in Los Angeles last week. "The kids are going to go to school there. We're really looking forward to it." Representatives for Pitt, 43, and Jolie, 31, could not immediately be reached for comment.

But according to the story posted on the magazine's Web site, the couple's relocation to the flood-ravaged Louisiana city is at least partly in keeping with their off-screen devotion to various humanitarian causes around the world.

ANGELINA Jolie and Brad Pitt

According to Us Weekly, the movie star pair moved to the Big Easy on Jan. 11 and have purchased a $3.5 million, six-bed mansion in the city's French Quarter—the fourth house owned by the couple.

One diner at a Decatur Street restaurant told the magazine he saw Jolie quietly mixing with the locals the day after she and Pitt moved to town. *Reuters*

RUSHES

KARYLLE and Dingdong Dantes

No wedding plans yet

DINGDONG Dantes still has to talk to girlfriend Kaye Tatlonghari, also known as singer Karylle, about marriage.

"We have been together for about two years," Dingdong, 26, said, "but we have no plans—yet." The actor, who stars in the GMA 7 underwater fantasy series "Atlantika," said it was better not to discuss marriage just now, "so that, when the time comes, it will be special and not something that we talk about everyday."

But Dingdong has plans for this year, now that "Atlantika" is coming to a close (in mid February). Among these plans is to go back to school at the Ateneo University to finish his degree in Interdisciplinary Studies. "I have three semesters to go," the actor said.

Dingdong, 26, said he has nothing lined up after "Atlantika" because he is concerned with the quality of his projects. "It's not about the money. I learned a lot of things with 'Atlantika.' [For instance] I learned to work harder despite constraints during the shoot."

He also learned to hold his breath longer for underwater scenes, shot in Anilao. "We had training," said Dingdong, "but it was still tough in the beginning."

But he's not holding his breath when it comes to the future. "It will come," he said. "I just don't know what it will bring." *Nini Valera*

"Dharma" pregnant

LOS ANGELES— Actress Jenna Elfman, who starred in TV's "Dharma & Greg," is expecting her first child, her spokeswoman said.

Elfman and her husband, actor Bodhi Elfman, have been married for 16 years and are "elated about the impending birth," publicist Jenni Weinman said in a statement Friday.

"Jenna looks and feels amazing. She is certain to be one hot mama!" Weinman said.

Elfman, 35, played free-spirited Dharma Finklestein Montgomery in the odd-couple comedy "Dharma & Greg," which ran from 1997-2002 on ABC.

She recently starred in the CBS comedy "Courting Alex." *AP*

JENNA ELFMAN

Pacino as Dali

LOS ANGELES—American actor Al Pacino will play Salvador Dali in a new film about the eccentric Spanish surrealist painter's final years, Hollywood's trade press reported Friday.

The film will be adapted from a book by Belgian journalist and novelist Stan Lauryssens, a former neighbor of Dali, who died in 1989 at the age of 84, Variety said. *AFP*

AL PACINO

Next time, research!

SYDNEY—US pop star Pink has sheepishly backed away from a campaign to boycott Australian wool stemming from allegations that farmers Down Under are cruel to sheep.

The singer, due to tour Australia in April, admitted Wednesday that she had not done enough research before joining the campaign by the US-based People for the Ethical Treatment of Animals (PETA).

PINK

In a PETA video last year, Pink branded the practice of sheep "mulesing" as "sadistic." Mulesing involves cutting off slices of flesh from lambs' rumps to prevent flystrike—an infestation of flesh-eating maggots.

But after receiving a letter from Australian sheep farmers and being advised that they planned to phase out "mulesing" by 2010, Pink told Australia's Nine Network television she had not been fully informed.

"I probably could have been a lot more researched, on my own. That's the lesson I'm taking from this," she said. *AFP*

Rehab, then world tour

NASHVILLE, Tennessee—Country singer Keith Urban, who has completed his treatment for alcohol abuse, will ease back onto stage with a short run of club shows in the United Kingdom and Germany in April, his spokesman said Tuesday.

KIETH URBAN

The shows will launch Urban's world tour in support of his latest album, "Love, Pain & the whole crazy thing," the singer's spokesman, Paul Freundlich, announced Tuesday.

Urban, 39, sought treatment just before the album came out in November, forcing him to delay the tour and several TV appearances.

The Australian-reared singer and his wife, actress Nicole Kidman were married in Sydney in June, and then moved to Nashville, where he records. They were seen together in Australia late last month. *AP*

Diana on "Idol"

NEW YORK—Diana Ross says she is a busy woman these days. So busy, in fact, she has not had time to see the hit film "Dreamgirls," which is loosely based on her life as a Motown starlet.

The singer told CBS "Late Show" host David Letterman on Tuesday she is going to be a mentor on Fox's "American Idol" and is planning a world tour in March to promote her new album, "I Love You."

Ross said she did not see the musical version of "Dreamgirls," either.

When Letterman asked if she was curious about the film, Ross joked: "Yes, I've heard a lot about it. I'm going to see it with my lawyers." *AP*

Speaking of the show …

LOS ANGELES—The "American Idol" auditions in Seattle, dubbed the "weirdest turnout in history" by host Ryan Seacrest, more than lived up to the billing.

"What the bloody hell was that?" British judge Simon Cowell said on Wednesday's show after enduring a unique version of "Unchained Melody," adding, "It was almost non-human."

In fact, the two-day tryout for Fox's hit singing talent was a real zoo.

One big-eyed, failed hopeful was compared to a "bush baby," a jungle animal, by the caustic Cowell, who termed another contestant, a 6-foot-4 woman, a "giraffe."

Seattle was one of seven cities where auditions were held last summer. The next episode, on Tuesday, will feature the Memphis, Tennessee, tryouts.

"You could lie in a bath with your mouth open and you couldn't sing," Cowell told one woman who insisted that a drink of water would smooth her delivery. *AP*

Speaking of winners …

LOS ANGELES—Singer Kelly Clarkson will soon be showing her racing stripes in the biggest partnership NASCAR has ever made with a music artist, the auto racing franchise announced.

"Anyone who knows me knows I'm a race fan and love NASCAR," the former "American Idol" and Grammy-winning singer said in a NASCAR press release Thursday. "I look forward to hanging out with the fans, drivers and the entire NASCAR community."

Clarkson will be "integrated into all aspects of NASCAR," including television spots, charitable events and NASCAR's awards dinner in New York City in December, NASCAR said.

The 24-year-old singer rose to pop-rock stardom after snagging the first "American Idol" crown in 2002. *AP*

Who drinks this?

TOKYO—Actor-rapper Will Smith presented the Japanese prime minister with two bottles of wine on a visit to Tokyo Thursday—only to find out Shinzo Abe was teetotal.

Abe accepted the gift of red and white bottles of wine from Smith, who met with him on a visit to the capital to promote his new movie. "I don't drink alcohol, but my wife does," Abe said as he accepted the souvenir.

Smith, decked out in a beige jacket and a brown shirt and tie, admitted he was jittery about the meeting. "It was the first time I met a prime minister, so I was a little nervous. He seems smart and warm and caring. It seems like Japan is in good hands." *AFP*

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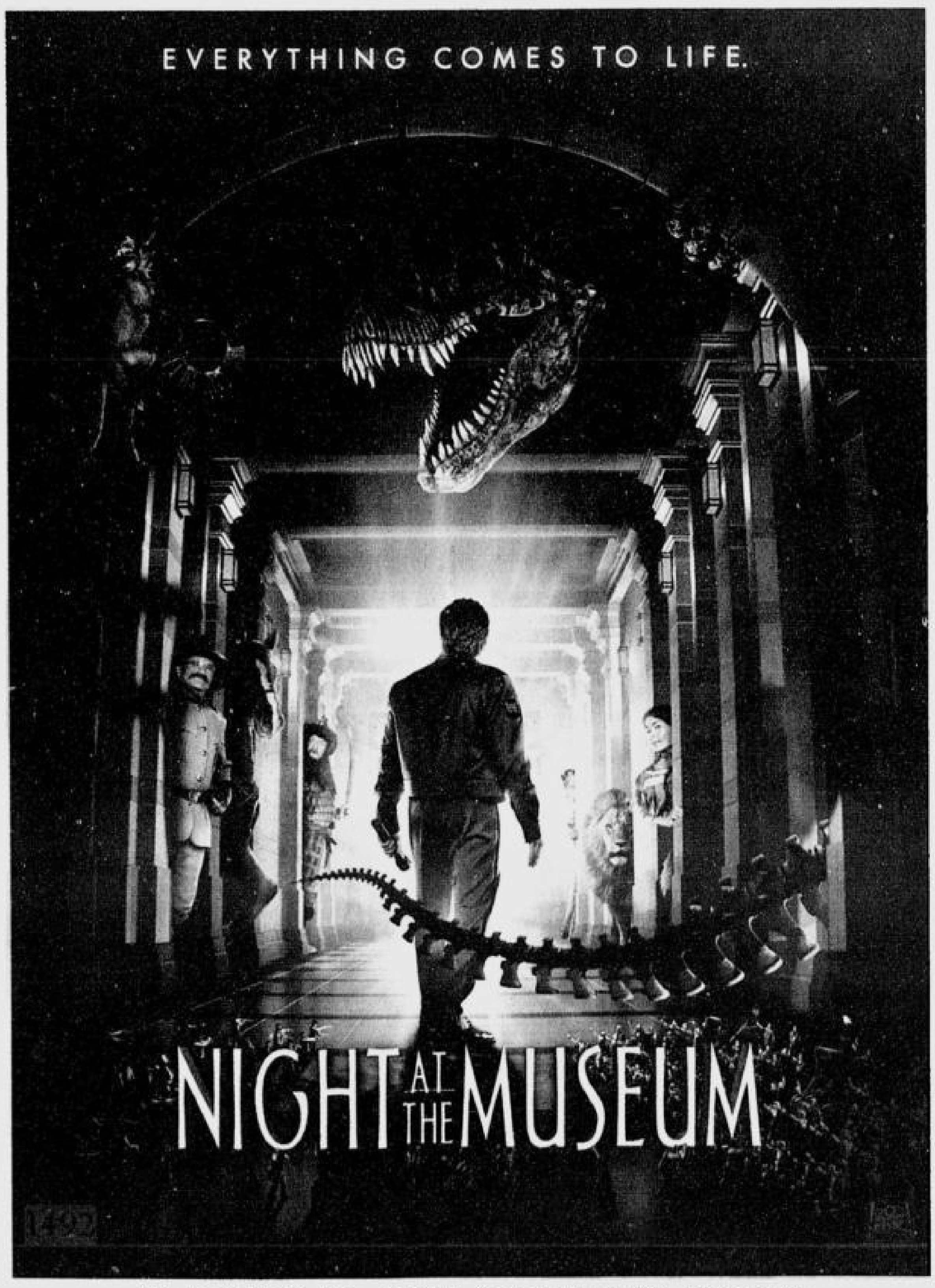

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